Saturday December 27 1997

Abu Dhabi D 8.50 · Albania US$ 2 · Andorra FF 10 · Austria AS 30 · Bahrain BD 0.85 · Belgium BF 70 · Bulgaria LV 580 · Canada C$ 3.95 · Croatia KN 12.50 · Cyprus C£ 1.00 · Czech Republic KC56 · Denmark DK 17 · Dubai D 8.50 · Egypt E£ 6.50 · Estonia K 30 · Finland FM 15 · France FF 12 · Germany DM 3.80 · Greece D 500 · Hong Kong HK$ 25 · Hungary F 280 · Iceland IK 185 · Israel NIS 11.50 · Italy L 3,500 · Jordan JD 1.25 · Kenya KSH 150 · Kuwait KD 0.50 · Latvia US$ 2 · Lebanon LL 3000 · Luxembourg LF 65 · Madeira E 270 · Malta ML 0.50 · Morocco D 25 · Netherlands G 4.25 · Norway NK 18 · Oman OR 1.00 · Pakistan R 80 · Poland Z 6.20 · Portugal E 240 · Qatar QR 8.50 · Russia US$ 2.75 · Saudi Arabia R 10 · Slovakia SK 65 · Slovenia SLT 290 · Spain P 250 · Sweden SK 17 · Switzerland SF 3.50 · Thailand B 80 · Turkey TL 170,000 · Ukraine US$ 3.50 · USA US$ 3.00

The Guardian

INTERNATIONAL

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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

Memories of a woman under pressure

Exclusive short story by AS Byatt

The Week, page 15

Lisa Buckingham

Why fat is a financial issue

Comment

Goths at the gate of Emperor Clinton

Lewis Lapham, page 9

The Boxing Day hunt at Corbridge, Northumberland, one of 280 around the country which drew an estimated total support of 250,000 PHOTOGRAPH: RAOUL DIXON

Hunters rally for show of strength

HUNT supporters put on a show of defiance yesterday, gathering in their hundreds of thousands on what is traditionally the most important day in the hunting calendar, *writes Geoffrey Gibbs.*

But a strong presence of blood sport opponents underlined the current of opinion running against the practice of hunting with hounds. Supporters of the League Against Cruel Sports jeered and waved placards proclaiming "Out Foxed. Out Dated. Out Voted."

Mike Foster, MP for Worcester, whose private members bill to ban hunting won huge support in the Commons, said the hunters' turnout proved that hunting was not a method of pest control but an entertainment. "The message is loud and clear to those hunting this Boxing Day — their days are numbered."

The meets passed off largely without incident, according to Pamela Morton, spokeswoman for the British Field Sports Society. An estimated 250,000 supporters had turned out at 280 hunts around the country.

A child makes her protest in Crewkerne, Somerset

David Thavenot, chairman of the Dart Vale and South Pool Harriers, meeting at Kingsbridge, south Devon, said proposals to ban hunting were the thin end of the wedge for country people. "Huge numbers . . . are concerned about threats to their way of life, their jobs and the economy of the countryside. We are determined that hunting should continue."

Labour MEPs face cull

Row looms over Blairite poll lists

Michael White
Political Editor

TONY Blair is heading for an explosive row over the Labour Party's determination to remove unreliable or elderly Euro MPs from the approved list of candidates for the 1999 European elections and replace them with dynamic young experts in the Blairite mould.

Under the system of proportional representation which will be used for the first time in 1999, Labour MEPs are resigned to losing up to half the 62 seats they won in 1994. But what some are calling a "cull of the awkward squad" would ensure that far fewer members of Britain's current delegation in Strasbourg could hope to win re-election.

Though "no final, final decision" has been taken by the high-powered committee of ministers, National Executive Committee members and party officials, suspicions of a top-down coup have been heightened by the discovery that Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, has decided to uphold the "closed list" system. That will prevent voters choosing between rival candidates as well as rival parties on the all-important PR lists.

"The great fear is that critical decisions will be taken in very high places because that is the best way to weed, to cull and select, to favour and reward," an MEP said this week. Some are privately voicing concern at the timetable which seeks to have all nominations confirmed before Labour's party conference in October — nine months before Euro-polling day. Local parties are also beginning to stir against it.

With the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats watching to see how Labour will handle Britain's first nationwide PR elections, MEPs are sending a deputation to meet key NEC members on January 6.

They want local party members rather than the party machine in London to decide the final order in which chosen names (usually eight) appear on the approved list printed on the ballot paper.

They will also seek assurances of fair play for existing MEPs, some of whom have been condemned as too old, too leftwing or too "off message". To complicate matters, female MEPs want positive discrimination to improve the gender balance. There are no female Labour MEPs in the party's heartlands north of the Humber and only 15 in the whole UK delegation.

That would mean putting women's names as numbers one and two in some regional lists, even at the risk of ousting effective male colleagues.

In future European elections, a position near the top of a party list will be crucial to success because seats will be allocated proportionately to the party, not the individual. With Labour headquarters determined to improve the quality of its team, even moderate MEPs fear the list will be dominated by loyalists and "Richard Branson types". Ministers are known to want to encourage outsiders with no political track record to become MEPs, much as they have brought in business expertise to Whitehall.

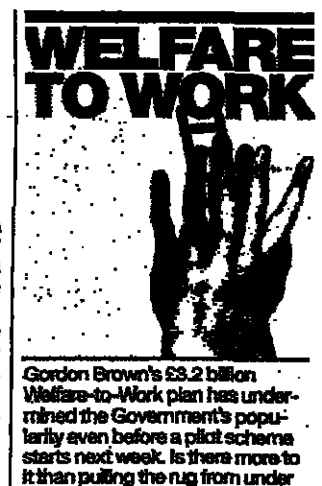
Under the version of PR adopted by Mr Blair's cabinet, Britain's MEPs will no longer be picked by the first-past-the-post system in one of 87 super-constituencies. Voters in nine English regions, plus Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (which already has PR), will be asked to back a party or an independent candidate with virtually no chance.

But existing MEPs and other would-be party hopefuls from outside the charmed circle believe that local members should have a say in who goes on the list and in what pecking order. To offset the power of the central party machine there could be regional conferences or even one member, one vote primary elections, as in some EU states where PR has long been the norm.

But party insiders admit that what is most likely is a reverse of traditional practice, under which candidates are picked locally and then endorsed — or, in rare cases, rejected — by the NEC in London. It is being described as pre-selection. "The interview process would be more akin to the NEC byelection panel," which picks a three-person shortlist to fight high-profile contests, a party official said.

Mr Straw is said to have moved away from his pledge to reconsider the "closed list", made during the second reading of the Euro-PR bill last month. Open lists would be too complicated.

Key players in Mr Blair's camp still seek to assure MEPs and other hopefuls that "there has got to be some form of involvement by individual party members at some stage in the process, the question is what point".



Gordon Brown's £3.2 billion Welfare-to-Work plan has undermined the Government's popularity even before a pilot scheme starts next week. Is there more to it than pulling the rug from under single mothers and the disabled? In the first of a four-part series starting on Monday, Martin Kettle reports from Wisconsin where "tough love" has cut the number of families on welfare from 100,000 to fewer than 36,000.

Kaunda on hunger strike after arrest in 'coup plot' clampdown

Chris McGreal
in Johannesburg

THE former Zambian president, Kenneth Kaunda, was on hunger strike yesterday after failing in a high court bid to win release from detention without charge, apparently for alleged complicity in a failed coup.

Mr Kaunda, aged 73, was detained by paramilitary police on Christmas Day under a state of emergency imposed after junior army officers allegedly tried to overthrow President Frederick Chiluba two months ago.

Mr Kaunda asked a special high court sitting to order the government to charge or release him. The judge declined to do either and adjourned the hearing until Monday amid tight security.

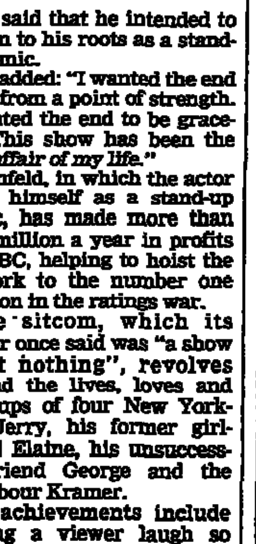
Mr Kaunda looked tired and haggard after his first 24 hours in detention. He was flown by military helicopter from Lusaka to an unknown destination. His son, Wezi, said the former president was refusing even bread and water.

"Quite clearly Dr Kaunda's detention has nothing to do with serving justice. This is a case of settling old scores and Mr Chiluba is determined to humiliate Dr Kaunda," Wezi Kaunda said. "My concern is that this government intends to do him fatal harm."

On October 28, a small group of soldiers seized the radio station and claimed to have taken over the country. A "Captain Solo" broadcast a demand to Mr Chiluba to surrender within the hour or die. Before the deadline was up, the coup was quashed.

Mr Kaunda, who ruled Zambia for 27 years and leads the opposition United National Independence Party (Unip), was detained shortly before dawn on Christmas Day after more than 60 policemen wearing camouflage fatigues and carrying automatic weapons surrounded his home.

Although the government has not specifically linked Mr Kaunda's arrest to the failed coup, it has intimated that he had a hand in it even though he was in South Africa during the abortive putsch.



Kenneth Kaunda: detained under state of emergency

Mr Kaunda's supporters say Mr Chiluba stage-managed the supposed coup to justify a crackdown on his bitterest rival and other opponents.

Under the state of emergency, the police have powers to detain people for up to 28 days without charge. About 90 opposition politicians and army officers are being held without charge; Amnesty International has accused the government of torturing many of those detained.

The unpopular Mr Chiluba has used increasingly repressive tactics to keep the former president at bay, rewriting the constitution to prevent him from running against him in last year's ballot.

Several senior members of Mr Kaunda's party were detained before the last election after being blamed for a series of bombs, allegedly placed by a shadowy group known as Black Mamba. They deny any involvement.

In August Mr Kaunda was slightly wounded when shots were fired at his car while he was on his way to a political rally. He later accused the police of trying to kill him.

Leader comment, page 8

Seinfeld 'no' to £3m an episode

Martin Kettle in Washington

IN A move that will disappoint millions of fans on both sides of the Atlantic, America's most popular television performer has decided to call time on his phenomenally successful show.

Jerry Seinfeld, creator and star of the Seinfeld sitcom, has told the NBC network, for which he has made millions of dollars in profits, that he will stop production of his show in May at the end of its current 22-episode series.

As NBC tried to dissuade the star from ending the record-breaking series, it emerged that Seinfeld had turned down a $5 million-an-episode (£3 million) deal that would have made him the highest-paid performer in television.

Seinfeld insisted that his decision did not hinge on money. "They did everything humanly possible," he said of NBC's efforts, "but I was not even looking for a raise."

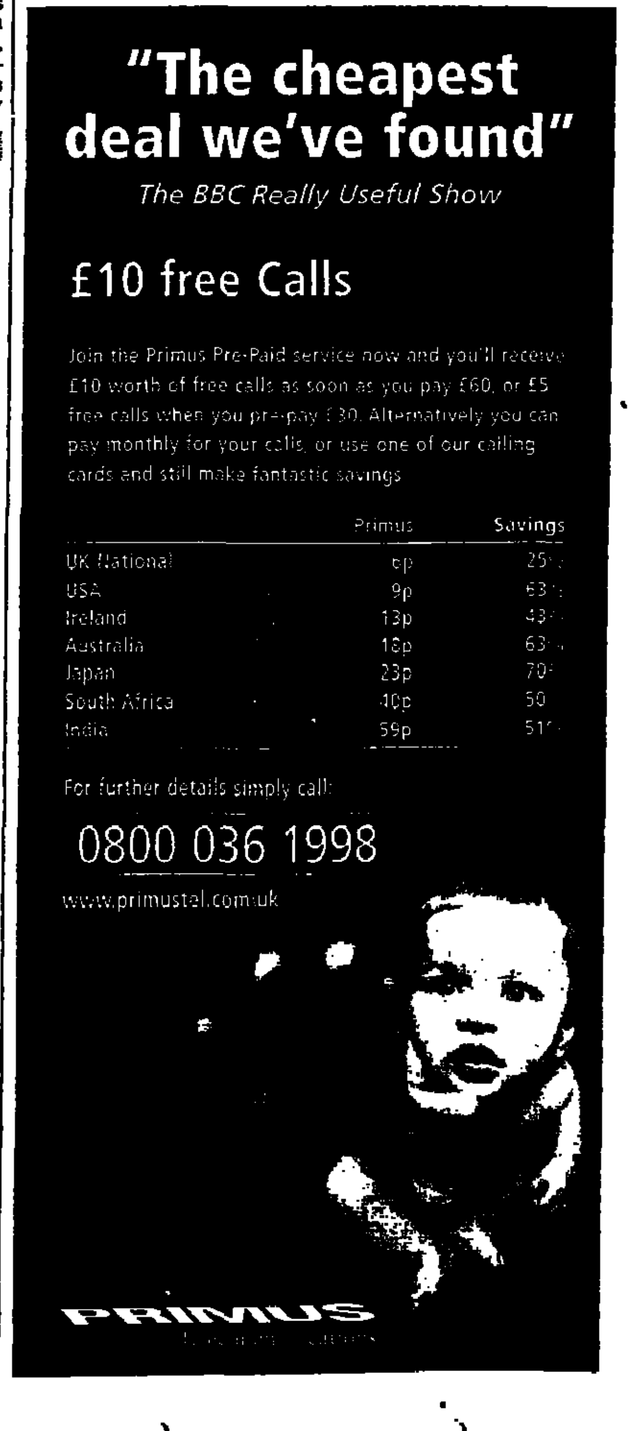
He said that he intended to return to his roots as a stand-up comic.

He added: "I wanted the end to be from a point of strength. I wanted the end to be graceful. This show has been the love affair of my life."

Seinfeld, in which the actor plays himself as a stand-up comic, has made more than $200 million a year in profits for NBC, helping to hoist the network to the number one position in the ratings war.

The sitcom, which its author once said was "a show about nothing", revolves around the lives, loves and hang-ups of four New Yorkers: Jerry, his former girlfriend Elaine, his unsuccessful friend George and the neighbour Kramer.

Its achievements include making a viewer laugh so much that he went into a coma, and compelling the pilot of an aircraft that was screening a Seinfeld episode to ask passengers not to laugh so much because they were making the wings shake.



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Duncan Campbell investigates a rogues' gallery

A childhood on the run inspires artist to turn head-hunter and capture criminal souls

Nick Reynolds with two of his casts of villains: Ronnie Biggs, and (right) the man who masterminded the Great Train Robbery, his father Bruce Reynolds PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID SILLITOE

HIDDEN off a side street, down some stairs by a railway line in east London, lie a collection of the heads of villains — Great Train robbers, gangsters, cat burglars, drug traffickers.

They are not the result of bounty-hunting but the work of Nick Reynolds, an artist putting together an exhibition of Britain's most famous criminals.

Nick Reynolds, aged 35, is the son of Bruce Reynolds, the architect of the 1963 Great Train Robbery. He was six when his father was arrested while on the run with his family in Mexico and the United States.

"When he was in prison he used to send me hundreds of postcards of artists, and explain who they were and what they did," says Nick of his father. He had found an old suitcase of them recently, including one of Magritte's famous surrealist picture of a train coming through a fireplace. This inspired him to cast a head of his father with a gold locomotive, like that of the mail train, emerging from his mouth.

Among other heads he has cast are "Mad" Frankie Fraser, complete with strait-jacket, Ronnie Biggs (whom he visited in Brazil), Fred Foreman, and cannabis smuggler Howard Marks. George "Taters" Chatham, probably this century's most active cat burglar, was done just after his death and is a genuine "death's head" — "They're much easier to do than when they're alive."

Having been a diver in the Royal Navy for seven years, and served in the Falklands war, Reynolds is now a travelling musician, playing harmonica with bands like the reformed Pretty Things and Octopus, and currently with the jazz-dance band, Blowpipe, as well as working in his studio in Clerkenwell.

"It's not a very pleasant process," he says of the casting. "They have to strip to the waist and I slick back their hair with Vaseline and put alginate (the material used by dentists) all over their faces. They have straws up their noses to breathe." The process can take up to 1½ hours.

George Chatham's sister allowed him to do the death's head at a crematorium in Richmond. "He was smiling," he says of the man who burgled his way through Mayfair and Knightsbridge for 50 years before his death this year. "His sister said it was because he was with God."

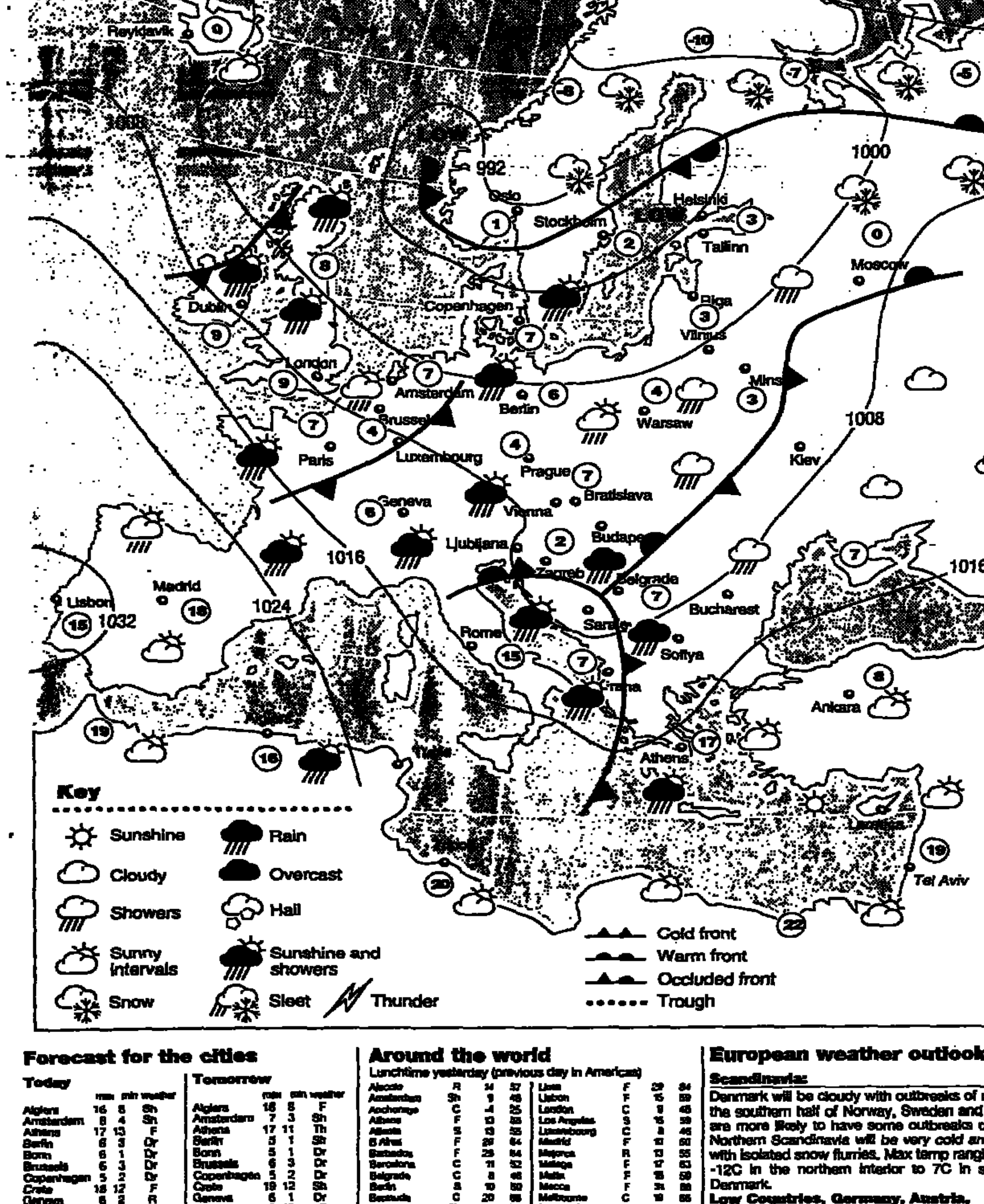
He warns his subjects that their thoughts while he works will be reflected in their portrait. Ronnie Biggs, typically, has a slight smile on his face. "It's a sort of snapshot of the soul," says Reynolds.

Originally the idea was to have a Heroes and Villains exhibition, but so far the villains are in the majority.

"It's funny to see what happens. They're ostracised one minute and celebrated the next." Having missed the chance to do Ronnie Kray, he is conscious that fate can whip away potential subjects *unexpectedly — the former* train robber Charlie Wilson was killed by a hitman in *Spain, while Buster Edwards* took his own life — so now he is always ready to cast.

Kenneth Noye, now supposedly Britain's most wanted man, is Reynolds' next target — but Interpol and the Kent police are waiting in the queue in front of him.

The weather in Europe



Forecast for the cities

Today

	max	min	weather
Algiers	16	8	Sh
Amsterdam	8	4	Sh
Athens	17	13	F
Berlin	6	3	Dr
Bonn	6	1	Dr
Brussels	6	3	Dr
Copenhagen	5	2	Dr
Crete	18	12	F
Geneva	6	2	R
Larnaca	18	9	S
London	9	3	Sh
Madrid	11	3	F
Milan	6	3	F
Nice	15	7	S
Oslo	-1	-4	Sn
Paris	7	3	Dr
Rome	15	4	Sh
Stockholm	2	-4	Sn
Tunis	18	10	Sh
Vienna	7	1	Sh

Tomorrow

	max	min	weather
Algiers	18	8	F
Amsterdam	7	3	Sh
Athens	17	11	Th
Berlin	5	1	Sh
Bonn	5	1	Dr
Brussels	6	3	Dr
Copenhagen	5	2	Dr
Crete	19	12	Sh
Geneva	6	1	Dr
Larnaca	19	10	F
London	9	6	F
Madrid	10	6	C
Milan	10	2	F
Nice	14	6	S
Oslo	-1	-2	Sn
Paris	7	3	C
Rome	13	2	F
Stockholm	-1	-4	Sn
Tunis	16	8	Th
Vienna	4	0	Sh

Monday

	max	min	weather
Algiers	19	11	Sh
Amsterdam	6	1	F
Athens	15	10	Sh
Berlin	4	-2	C
Bonn	5	-2	Sh
Brussels	5	1	F
Copenhagen	3	1	Dr
Crete	19	12	Sh
Geneva	5	1	R
Larnaca	20	11	Th
London	9	5	R
Madrid	11	7	R
Milan	9	3	F
Nice	12	7	Sh
Oslo	0	-3	Sn
Paris	6	2	Sh
Rome	11	4	F
Stockholm	0	-3	Sn
Tunis	17	8	F
Vienna	3	-2	Sl

Tuesday

	max	min	weather
Algiers	19	11	Sh
Amsterdam	6	2	F
Athens	16	11	F
Berlin	2	-3	F
Bonn	3	-1	Sh
Brussels	4	2	C
Copenhagen	4	1	C
Crete	16	12	F
Geneva	5	2	R
Larnaca	20	10	Sh
London	9	5	Sh
Madrid	13	8	C
Milan	8	3	R
Nice	13	7	Sh
Oslo	-1	-3	Sn
Paris	7	4	Sh
Rome	13	4	Sh
Stockholm	0	-1	C
Tunis	17	11	Sh
Vienna	1	-4	C

C, cloudy; Cl, clear; Dr, drizzle; F, fair; Fg, fog; H, hail; Hz, haze; R, rain; Sh, showers; Sl, sleet; Sn, snow; S, sunny; Th, thunder. *(previous day's readings)

Around the world

Lunchtime yesterday (previous day in Americas)

		C	F			C	F
Ajaccio	R	14	57	Lima	F	29	84
Amsterdam	Sh	9	48	Lisbon	F	15	59
Anchorage	C	-4	25	London	C	9	48
Athens	F	13	55	Los Angeles	S	15	59
Atlanta	S	13	55	Luxembourg	C	8	46
B Aires	F	29	84	Madrid	F	10	50
Barbados	F	29	84	Majorca	R	13	55
Barcelona	C	11	52	Malaga	F	17	63
Belgrade	C	8	46	Malta	F	15	59
Berlin	S	10	50	Mecca	F	31	88
Bermuda	C	20	68	Melbourne	C	19	66
Biarritz	Sh	12	54	Mexico City	n/a		
Bombay	F	30	86	Miami	C	28	82
Bordeaux	C	13	55	Milan	Dr	6	43
Boston	R	4	39	Montreal	R	2	36
Brisbane	F	29	84	Moscow	M	-1	30
Brussels	C	9	48	Munich	C	8	46
Budapest	R	4	39	Nairobi	C	22	72
Cairo	F	17	63	Naples	C	15	59
Calcutta	S	23	73	New Delhi	Fg	10	50
Calgary	C	2	36	New Orleans	S	16	61
Cape Town	S	22	72	New York	M	9	48
Casablanca	C	19	66	Nice	C	11	52
Chicago	C	0	32	Oslo	S	2	36
Christchurch	F	16	61	Paris	Sh	10	50
Corfu	F	13	55	Perth	F	36	97
Dakar	S	26	79	Prague	F	8	46
Dallas	C	8	46	Reykjavik	F	1	34
Darwin	R	26	79	Rhodes	S	15	59
Dhaka	S	23	73	Rio de Jan.	C	31	88
Dublin	F	6	43	Rome	C	15	59
Florence	M	11	52	Santiago	M	2	36
Frankfurt	Sh	10	50	Singapore	C	31	88
Geneva	Sh	8	46	Stockholm	R	3	37
Gibraltar	C	16	61	Strasbourg	F	11	52
Hamburg	Sh	9	48	Sydney	S	32	88
Helsinki	Sn	-2	28	Tel Aviv	C	18	64
Hong Kong	C	22	72	Tenerife	S	22	72
Honolulu	S	28	82	Tokyo	C	8	46
Innsbruck	C	6	43	Toronto	C	3	37
Istanbul	S	9	48	Tunis	F	16	61
Jersey	Sh	10	50	Valencia	C	15	59
Jerusalem	F	14	57	Vancouver	C	5	41
Jo'burg	F	26	79	Venice	Dr	6	43
Karachi	S	26	79	Vienna	R	4	39
Kiev	C	1	34	Warsaw	C	9	48
Kingston	S	32	90	Washington	C	9	48
Larnaca	F	17	63	Zurich	C	7	46

European weather outlook

Scandinavia:
Denmark will be cloudy with outbreaks of rain, but the southern half of Norway, Sweden and Finland are more likely to have some outbreaks of snow. Northern Scandinavia will be very cold and frosty with isolated snow flurries. Max temp ranging from -12C in the northern interior to 7C in southern Denmark.

Low Countries, Germany, Austria, Switzerland:
An unsettled day with showers and some longer spells of rain in many places, although the Low Countries and northern Germany will see some sunny periods between the showers. The Alps will have some more fresh snow. Max temp 4-8C.

France:
A blustery day with sunny spells and showers. Some of the showers will be heavy and lengthy, but the Alps will see some welcome fresh snow. Max temp around 6-10C, but a little higher on the Mediterranean coast.

Spain and Portugal:
The north will have sunny spells and showers, but most of Iberia will be dry with some sunshine after any early fog has cleared. Max temp 11-14C, but nearer 18C along the coastal fringe in the south.

Italy:
The far north will become increasingly cloudy but showers will struggle to cross the Alps. Central and southern Italy will be mild but unsettled with scattered heavy showers. Max temp ranging from 8C in the extreme north to 17C in the far south.

Greece:
Another very mild day with some sunshine, but showers will break out in the west later. Max temp 14-18C.

Television and radio — Saturday

BBC 1

8.00am Flash Gordon: Space Soldiers. 8.20 News and Weather. 8.30 Noddy. 8.40 Highlander. 9.05 Conan the Adventurer. 9.30 The New Adventures of Superman. 10.15 Almost Live, Definitely Kicking. 12.15 FILM: When Dinosaurs Ruled the Earth. 1.50 News and Weather. 1.55 FILM: Half a Sixpence. 4.15 The World's Strongest Man. 4.45 FILM: Bless This House. 6.15 News and Weather. 6.25 Regional News and Sport. 6.30 Are You Being Served? 7.00 FILM: Twins. 8.40 The National Lottery Draw. 9.05 Casualty. 10.34 National Lottery Update. 10.35 Birds of a Feather. 11.15 The Mrs Merton Christmas Show. 11.45 News and Sport. 12.05 They Think It's All Over. 12.40 FILM: Carry On Again, Doctor. 2.10 Top of the Pops. 3.10 Weather. 3.15 BBC News 24.

BBC 2

7.35am FILM: Dames. 9.00 FILM: Count Three and Pray. 10.40 FILM: Seven Cities of Gold. 12.20 Cardiff Singer of the World. 1.10 Whitbread Round the World Race. 1.40 Racing from Chepstow. 3.45 FILM: Seven Seas to Calais. 5.25 Campaign Confessions. 6.15 TOTP 2. 7.00 An Evening with David Attenborough and Friends. 7.10 Flight of the Condor. 8.30 Too Close for Comfort. 8.45 Life in the Freezer. 9.20 The Natural World. 10.15 The Bat That Cracked the Frog Code. 10.50 The Haunted Huntress. 11.30 Stoats in the Priory. 12.10 Winning Programme. 1.00 FILM: The Incredible Shrinking Man. 2.20 FILM: War of the Colossal Beast. 3.25 Weather. 3.30 Close.

BBC Prime

● Intelsat

7.00am World News. 7.25 World Weather. 7.30 Noddy. 7.40 Wait on Earth. 7.55 Jonny Briggs. 8.10 ActivG. 8.35 Century Falls. 9.05 Blue Peter. 9.30 Grange Hill Omnibus. 10.05 Dr Who: Pyramids of Mars. 10.30 Style Challenge. 10.55 Ready, Steady, Cook. 11.25 World Weather. 11.30 EastEnders Omnibus. 12.50 Style Challenge. 1.15 Ready, Steady, Cook. 1.45 Kilroy. 2.30 Wildlife. 3.00 The Onedin Line. 3.50 World Weather. 3.55 Mortimer and Arabel. 4.10 Billy Webb's Amazing Adventures. 4.35 Blue Peter. 5.00 Grange Hill Omnibus. 5.35 Top of the Pops. 6.35 Dr Who: Pyramids of Mars. 7.00 Goodnight Sweetheart. 7.30 Are You Being Served? 8.00 Blackadder's Christmas Carol. 9.00 The Hummingbird Tree. 10.30 The Fast Show. 11.15 Shooting Stars. 11.50 TOTP2. 12.35 Later with Jools Holland. 1.35 World Weather. 1.45 King Girl. 3.00 Birds of a Feather. 3.30 Blackadder the Third. 4.00 Ruby Wax Meets - Pamela Anderson. 4.30 Counterblast. 5.00 All Our Children. 5.00 All Our Children. 6.00 A Mug's Game. 6.00 A Mug's Game.

BBC World

● Eutelsat

7.00am News. 7.30 Classic Adventure. 8.00 News. 8.30 Hard Talk. 9.00 News. 9.30 World Review '97. 10.00 News. 10.05 Rough Guide to the Americas. 11.00 News. 11.30 Holiday. 12.00 News. 12.30 This Week. 1.00 News. 1.05 Horizon. 2.00 News. 2.05 The Dream Machine. 3.00 News. 3.30 Film '97 with Barry Norman. 4.00 News. 4.30 Rough Guide to the Americas. 5.00 News. 5.30 Hard Talk. 6.00 News. 6.30 The Clothes Show. 7.00 News. 7.30 This Week. 8.00 News. 8.30 World Review '97. 9.00 News. 9.05 Horizon. 10.00 News. 10.30 World Review '97. 11.00 News. 11.30 Top Gear. 12.00 News. 12.30 World Review '97. 1.00 News. 1.05 The Dream Machine. 2.00 News. 2.05 Rough Guide to the Americas. 3.00 News. 3.30 World Review '97. 4.00 News. 4.30 Hardtalk. 5.00 News. 5.30 This Week. 6.00 News. 6.30 India Business Report.

Radio 4

92.4-94.6 MHz; 198 kHz (1514)

7.00am News Briefing. 7.10 Farming Today. 7.50 Prayer for the Day. 7.55 Weather. 8.00 Today. 9.58 Weather. 10.00 News. 10.05 Sport on 4. 10.30 Breakaway. 11.00 News; Loose Ends. 12.00 News; Agenda. 12.30 From Our Own Correspondent. 1.00 The Importance of Being Dilbert. 1.25 News Quiz of the Year. 1.55 Weather. 2.00 News. 2.30 Natural Consequences. 2.55 Shipping Forecast. 3.00 News; Word of Mouth's Christmas Cracker. 3.30 Playhouse: The Affair at Grover Station. 5.00 News; Mother Tongue. 5.30 Science Now. 6.00 Toy Stories. 6.40 In Celebration. 6.50 Shipping Forecast. 6.55 Weather. 7.00 Six O'Clock News. 7.25 Week Ending. 7.50 Utopia and Other Destinations. 8.30 Kaleidoscope Feature. 8.50 On These Days. 9.50 Saturday Night Theatre: Love Divine. 10.35 Classics with Kay. 10.50 Ten to Ten. 10.59 Weather. 11.00 News. 11.15 Late Night Theatre: Passport to Pimlico. 12.30 Stanza on Stage. 1.00 News. 1.30 Late Story: Happy Prince. 1.48 Shipping Forecast.

BBC World Service

BBC World Service can be received in England on MW 648 kHz (463m) and in Western Europe on LW 198 kHz (1515m)

7.00am Newsday. 7.30 Meridian Feature. 8.00 News. 8.15 From the Weeklies. 8.30 Foul Play. 9.00 News. 9.10 Pause for Thought. 9.15 Wisdom of the World. 9.30 Andy Kershaw's World of Music. 10.00 News. 10.05 World Business Review. 10.15 The Works. 10.45 Sports Round-Up. 11.00 Newsdesk. 11.30 Northern Lights. 12.00 Newsdesk. 12.30 People and Politics. 1.00 News. 1.05 World Business Review. 1.15 A Jolly Good Show. 1.45 Short Story. 2.00 Newshour. 3.00 News. 3.05 Sportsworld. 4.00 News. 4.05 Sportsworld. 5.00 News. 5.15 Sportsworld. 5.30 (648 only) News in German. 6.00 News. 6.01 Weekend. 6.30 From Our Own Correspondent. 7.00 Newsdesk. 7.30 Science in Action. 8.00 News. 8.01 Westway. 8.30 Options. 9.00 Newshour. 10.00 News. 10.05 World Business Review. 10.15 Britain Today. 10.30 Meridian Live. 11.00 Newsdesk. 11.30 Play of the Week: Nativity to Judgement. 12.30 Andy Kershaw's World of Music. 1.00 Newsdesk. 1.30 Letter from America. 1.45 Britain Today. 2.00 Newsdesk. 2.30 Wisdom of the World. 2.45 Sports Round-Up. 3.00 Newsday. 3.30 Music Review. 4.00 News. 4.05 World Business Review. 4.15 Sports Round-Up. 4.30 From Our Own Correspondent. 5.00 Newsdesk. 5.30 Global Business. 6.00 Newsday. 6.30 Jazzmatazz.

The Movie Channel

● Astra

7.00 The Song of Bernadette. 9.35 My Uncle: The Alien. 11.10 August. 1.00 Project: Alf. 3.00 As Good As Dead. 5.00 Young Indiana Jones: Treasure of the Peacock's Eye. 7.00 Richie Rich. 9.00 Broken Arrow. 11.00 Nick of Time. 12.30 Shadow Dancer. 2.10 Dream Man. 3.45 Adventures of a Private Eye. 5.25 Aladdin and His Magic Lamp.

Sky Movies

● Astra

7.00 Agatha Christie's Sparkling Cyanide. 9.00 Theodore Rex. 10.45 Sabrina. 12.50 Little Big League. 2.45 The Land Before Time II: The Great Valley Adventure. 4.00 The Land Before Time III: The Time of the Great Giving. 5.10 The Land Before Time IV: Journey Through the Mists. 6.25 Theodore Rex. 8.00 Sabrina. 10.00 Grumpier Old Men. 12.00 White Squall. 2.10 Once Were Warriors. 3.50 Killer. 5.25 Sparkling Cyanide.

Sky Sports

● Astra

7.00 NHL. 8.00 High 5. 8.30 Sports Centre. 9.00 Aerobics. 9.30 Racing News. 10.00 NHL. 11.00 NBA Basketball. 1.00 Sports Saturday. 6.30 Bobby Charlton's Football Scrapbook. 8.00 Football. 10.00 Boxing. 1.00 Sport Special. 1.30 World of Sailing. 2.00 Rugby Union. 4.00 Boxing. 7.00 Close.

Eurosport

● Astra/Eutelsat

8.30 Roller Skating. 9.00 Freeride. 9.30 Snowboarding. 10.00 Live Women's Alpine Skiing. 11.00 Ski-jumping. 12.00 Live Women's Alpine Skiing. 1.15 Cycling. 2.45 Football. 4.30 Bloopers. 5.00 Women's Alpine Skiing. 6.00 Martial Arts. 7.00 Offroad. 8.00 Darts. 10.00 Boxing. 11.00 Sumo. 12.00 Snooker. 2.00 Close.

Sky One

● Astra

8.00 Bump in the Night. 8.30 What-A-Mess. 9.00 Tattooed Teenage Alien Fighters from Beverly Hills. 9.30 Love Connection. 10.00 Wild West Cowboys of Moo Mesa. 10.30 Dream Team. 11.00 Mysterious Island. 12.00 The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles. 1.00 WWF Wrestling: Live Wire. 2.00 WWF Wrestling: Shotgun. 3.00 Kung Fu: The Legend Continues. 4.00 Star Trek. 5.00 Star Trek: The Next Generation. 6.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine. 7.00 Adventures of Sinbad. 8.00 Tarzan: The Epic Adventure. 9.00 Speed. 10.00 Cops I. 10.30 Cops II. 11.00 Law and Order. 12.00 Showbiz Weekly. 12.30 Extra Time. 1.00 The Movie Show. 1.30 L.A.P.D. 2.00 Dream On. 2.30 Revelations. 3.00 Long Play.

National Geographic

● Astra

8.00 Extreme Earth: In the Shadow of Vesuvius. 9.00 Nature's Nightmares Introduction. 9.01 Rat Wars. 9.30 Piranha! 10.00 Beeman. 10.30 Snake Bite. 11.00 Ants from Hell. 11.30 The Eagle and the Snake. 12.00 Lights! Camera! Bugs! 12.30 The Most Dangerous Jump in the World. 1.00 Christmas Island: March of the Crabs. 1.30 French Intimate Wildlife: Chamois Cliff.

UK Gold

● Astra

8.00 The Sullivans. 10.05 A Duty Free Christmas. 11.05 Neighbours. 1.05 EastEnders. 3.55 Ten Years in Albert Square. 4.30 The Les Dawson Show. 5.35 The Last Laugh: A Tribute to Les Dawson. 6.35 Larry Grayson's Generation Game. 7.40 Shut That Door: Larry Grayson. 8.35 Hi-De-Hi. 9.20 Croft and Perry: The Sitcoms. 10.35 Morecambe and Wise. 11.50 The Importance of Being Ernie. 12.10 French and Saunders. 12.50 Paul Merton: The Series. 1.25 The Jack Dee Show. 2.50 Sight and Sound in Concert. 2.45 Miami Vice. 3.35 Shopping at Night.

NBC Superchannel

● Astra/Eutelsat

7.00 News. 8.00 The McLaughlin Group. 8.30 Europa Journal. 9.00 Tech 2000. 9.30 Computer Chronicles. 10.00 Internet Cafe. 10.30 Tech 2000. 11.00 Super Shop. 12.00 Super Sports: Class 1 Offshore World Championships. 12.30 Super Sport Special. 1.00 Golf. 2.00 NHL Power Week. 3.00 Davis Cup. 4.00 Five Star Adventure. 4.30 Europe a la Carte. 5.00 The Ticket. 5.30 VIP. 6.00 Classic Cousteau. 7.00 National Geographic Television. 8.00 Mr Rhodes. 8.30 Union Square. 9.00 Profiler. 10.00 The Tonight Show with Jay Leno. 11.00 Saturday Night Mystery: Mancuso FBI. 12.00 The Ticket. 12.30 VIP. 1.00 Jay Leno. 2.00 Intemight. 3.00 VIP. 3.30 Travel Xpress. 4.00 The Ticket. 4.30 Music Legends. 5.00 Executive Lifestyles. 5.30 The Ticket. 6.00 Travel Xpress. 6.30 Inspiration. 6.30 Inspiration.

Discovery

● Astra/Intelsat

5.00 Saturday Stack: History's Mysteries. 9.00 UFO. 11.00 UFO. 1.00 Raging Planet. 2.00 Top Marques. 2.30 Driving Passions. 3.00 Close.

Television and radio — Sunday

BBC 1

8.10am FILM: Custer of the West. 10.25 News and Weather. 10.30 New Every Morning. 11.15 FILM: Meet Me in Las Vegas. 1.05 Canterbury. 1.55 News and Weather. 2.00 EastEnders. 2.55 FILM: Porridge. 4.35 The World's Strongest Man. 4.55 EastEnders. 5.50 Final Score. 6.30 Antiques Roadshow: The Next Generation. 6.55 News and Weather. 7.10 Regional News. 7.15 Songs of Praise. 8.00 Last of the Summer Wine. 9.00 The Detectives Special. 9.50 The Women in White. 10.55 News. 11.10 Match of the Day. 12.25 Rhythm of Life. 1.25 Unplugged with George Michael. 2.05 FILM: Sixteen Candles. 3.30 Weather. 3.35 News 24.

BBC 2

8.30am Children's BBC: Noddy. 8.40 Teletubbies. 9.20 Spot. 9.25 Jackanory Gold. 9.40 Bliss. 9.55 The Animals of Farthing Wood. 10.20 Prince of Atlantis. 10.45 Noah's Island. 11.10 The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest. 11.30 Grange Hill. 12.00 Sweet Valley High. 12.25 Charlie Brown and Snoopy Show. 12.50 The Simpsons. 1.15 The Sunday Show. 1.45 Goya. 2.00 The Royal Institution Christmas Lectures: The Magical Maze. 3.00 The Merry Widow. 5.25 Campaign Confessions. 6.15 Dumas: The Cheetah. 7.05 Star Trek: Voyager. 7.50 FILM: Legend. 9.15 Third Rock from the Sun. 10.00 Laurens Van Der Post: A Tribute - A Voice From the Bundu. 10.55 Moviefirms. 12.25 Stella Street. 12.35 FILM: Le Colonel Chabert. 2.30 FILM: Terror from the Year 5,000. 3.40 Weather. 3.45 Close.

BBC Prime

● Intelsat

7.00am World News. 7.20 World Weather. 7.30 Wham! Bam! Strawberry Jam! 7.45 Bliss. 8.00 Mortimer and Arabel. 8.15 True Tilda. 8.45 Dark Season. 9.10 Blue Peter Special. 9.30 Grange Hill Omnibus. 10.05 Wildlife. 10.35 Style Challenge. 11.00 Ready, Steady, Cook. 11.30 All Creatures Great and Small. 12.30 Yes, Minister. 12.50 Style Challenge. 1.15 Ready, Steady, Cook. 1.45 Kilroy. 2.30 Wildlife. 3.00 Oliver Twist. 4.00 Jonny Briggs. 4.15 ActivG. 4.40 Blue Peter Special. 5.05 Grange Hill Omnibus. 5.40 TOTP2. 6.35 World Weather. 6.30 Antiques Roadshow. 7.00 Lovejoy. 8.00 Clarissa. 11.30 Songs of Praise. 12.15 Mastermind. 12.45 Wildlife. 1.15 The Aristocracy. 2.00 Westbeach. 3.00 Birds of a Feather. 3.30 Blackadder the Third. 4.00 Ruby Wax Meets. 4.30 Counterblast. 5.00 All Our Children. 5.00 All Our Children. 6.00 Love Hurts. 6.00 Love Hurts.

BBC World

● Eutelsat

7.00am News. 7.30 Film '97 with Barry Norman. 8.00 News. 8.30 Hard Talk. 9.00 News. 9.30 World Review '97. 10.00 News. 10.05 The Dream Machine. 11.00 News. 11.30 The Clothes Show. 12.00 News. 12.30 Hard Talk. 1.00 News. 1.05 Rough Guide to the Americas. 2.00 News. 2.10 Dateline London. 3.00 News. 3.30 Holiday. 4.00 News. 4.05 Horizon. 5.00 News. 5.30 Hardtalk. 6.00 News. 6.30 Top Gear. 7.00 News. 7.05 The Dream Machine. 8.00 News. 8.30 World Review '97. 9.00 News. 9.05 Rough Guide to the Americas. 10.00 News. 10.30 World Review '97. 11.00 News, World Business Report and 24 Hours. 12.00, 1.05 World Review 97. 1.30 Top Gear. 2.00 News. 2.30 World Review '97. 6.00 News. 6.30 Hard Talk.

Radio 4

92.4-94.6 MHz; 198 kHz (1514)

7.00am News Briefing. 7.10 Something Understood. 7.55 Weather. 8.00 News. 8.10 Sunday Papers. 8.15 On Your Farm. 8.40 Sunday. 9.50 Claire Rayner. 9.55 Weather. 10.00 News. 10.10 Sunday Papers. 10.15 Letter from America. 10.30 Morning Services. 11.15 The Archers. 12.15 Madummeme. 12.45 Sentimental Journey. 1.15 Desert Island Discs. 1.55 Weather. 2.00 The World This Weekend. 2.55 Shipping Forecast. 3.00 Gardeners' Question Time. 3.30 Classic Serial: War and Peace. 4.30 Pick of the Year. 5.15 History of Magic. 6.00 News; And Here's the Tape to Prove It. 6.30 Poetry Please! 6.50 Shipping Forecast. 6.55 Weather. 7.00 Six O'Clock News. 7.15 Bon Appetit. 7.30 Trumpton Riots Again. 8.00 Children's BBC Radio 4: The Horse and His Boy. 8.30 Breakaway. 9.00 The Natural History Programme. 9.30 Mother Tongue. 10.00 Everybody Has a Dream. 10.30 Costing the Earth. 10.59 Weather. 11.00 News. 11.15 Medicine Now. 11.45 Auntie Through the Looking Glass. 12.15 Something Understood. 1.00 News. 1.20 Bells on Sunday. 1.30 The Late Story: The Remarkable Rocket. 1.48 Shipping Forecast. 2.00 As World Service.

BBC World Service

BBC World Service can be received in England on MW 648 kHz (463m) and in Western Europe on LW 198 kHz (1515m)

7.00am Newsday. 7.30 In Praise of God. 8.00 News. 8.15 Letter from America. 8.30 A Jolly Good Show. 9.00 News. 9.10 Pause for Thought. 9.15 Short Story. 9.30 The Greenfield Collection. 10.00 News. 10.05 Write On. 10.15 From Our Own Correspondent. 10.45 Sports Round-Up. 11.00 Newsdesk. 11.30 Global Business. 12.00 Newsdesk. 12.30 Anything Goes. 1.00 News. 1.05 Write On. 1.15 In Praise of God. 1.45 Sports Round-Up. 2.00 Newshour. 3.00 News Summary. 3.01 Matter for Debate. 3.45 Letter from America. 4.00 News. 4.05 Sports Round-Up. 4.15 Concert Hall. 5.00 News. 5.15 Civilization. 5.30 (648 only) News in German. 5.45 Britain Today. 6.00 Europe Today. 6.30 Sense and Sensibilities. 6.45 Sports Round-Up. 7.00 Newsdesk. 7.30 Play of the Week: Nativity to Judgement. 8.30 Anything Goes. 9.00 Newshour. 10.00 News. 10.05 Write On. 10.15 Britain Today. 10.30 Music Review. 11.00 Newsdesk. 11.30 Health Matters. 11.45 Sports Round-Up. 12.00 News. 12.05 Science View. 12.30 Artyfacts. 12.45 Pop Short. 12.30 In Praise of God. 1.00 Newsdesk. 1.30 Short Story. 1.45 Britain Today. 2.00 Newsdesk. 2.30 Pick of the World. 3.00 Newsday. 3.30 Meridian Feature. 4.00 News. 4.05 Write On. 4.15 Sports Round-Up. 4.30 The Works. 5.00 Newsdesk. 5.30 Europe Today. 6.00 Newsday. 6.30 Europe Today.

The Movie Channel

● Astra

7.00 Two Years Before the Mast. 9.00 The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill, But Came Down a Mountain. 11.00 The Man from Colorado. 1.00 My Cousin Rachel. 3.00 Out There. 5.00 Young Indiana Jones and the Attack of the Hawkmen. 7.00 The Englishman Who Went Up a Hill, But Came Down a Mountain. 9.00 Devil in a Blue Dress. 11.00 Preview: The Juror. 11.05 The Juror. 1.10 The Movie Show. 1.40 Blood Money. 3.15 Deal of the Century. 4.55 Student Affairs.

Sky Movies

● Astra

7.00 Rough Cut. 9.00 Kiss Me Goodbye. 11.00 Dunston Checks In. 12.30 Guarding Tess. 2.00 Rough Cut. 4.00 Soul of the Game. 6.00 Dunston Checks In. 8.00 Preview: Spy Hard. 8.05 Spy Hard. 9.30 Airplane II: The Sequel. 11.00 Crimes of Passion: Voice from the Grave. 12.30 Carrington. 2.35 Strawberry and Chocolate. 4.25 Night Eyes 3.

Sky Sports

● Astra

7.00 Sports Unlimited. 8.00 World Sport Special. 8.30 Powerboat and Jetski World. 9.00 Boxing. 12.00 Goals on Sunday. 1.00 Rugby Union Update. 3.00 Rafting. 4.00 Powerboats. 4.30 Sport Special. 5.00 Football: Newcastle United v Liverpool - Live. 9.00 Futbol Mundial. 9.30 Windsurfing. 10.00 NFL. 1.30 Basketball. 3.30 Close.

Eurosport

● Astra/Eutelsat

8.30 Cross-Country Skiing. 9.00 Women's Alpine Skiing. 10.00 Live Women's Alpine Skiing. 11.00 Bobsleigh. 12.00 Live Women's Alpine Skiing. 1.15 Ski-jumping. 2.30 Live Equestrianism. 5.00 Ski-jumping. 6.00 Sumo. 8.00 Football. 10.00 Boxing. 11.00 Bloopers. 11.30 Football. 12.00 Sailing. 12.30 Rallying. 1.30 Close.

Sky One

● Astra

7.00 Hour of Power. 8.00 Bump in the Night. 8.30 What-A-Mess. 9.00 Tattooed Teenage Alien Fighters from Beverly Hills. 9.30 Love Connection. 10.00 Wild West Cowboys of Moo Mesa. 10.30 Dream Team. 11.00 Mysterious Island. 12.00 The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles. 1.00 Dream Team Omnibus. 2.00 WWF Wrestling: Superstars. 3.00 Kung Fu: The Legend Continues. 4.00 Star Trek. 5.00 Star Trek: The Next Generation. 6.00 Star Trek: Deep Space Nine. 7.00 The Simpsons. 7.30 The Simpsons. 8.00 The Pretender. 9.00 Earth: Final Conflict. 10.00 The X-Files. 11.00 The X-Files. 12.00 Forever Knight. 1.00 Jimmy's. 1.30 L.A.P.D. 2.00 Manhunter. 3.00 Long Play.

National Geographic

● Astra

8.00 Monkey Business Introduction. 8.01 Gorilla. 9.00 Monkeys of Hanuman. 10.00 Among the Wild Chimpanzees. 11.00 Harem of the Ethiopian Baboons. 12.00 The Urban Gorilla. 1.00 Among Baboons. 1.30 Bushbabies.

UK Gold

● Astra

8.00 The Pink Panther. 8.30 The Onedin Line. 9.15 That's Showbusiness. 9.45 Worzel Gummidge Down Under. 10.15 Blake's Seven. 11.15 Dr Who Omnibus: Black Orchid. 12.15 Dr Who Omnibus: Earthshock. 2.05 Dr Who: More Than 30 Years in the Tardis. 3.50 George and Mildred. 4.20 The Bill. 5.40 Open All Hours. 7.20 Keeping up Appearances. 8.00 Legacy of Murder. 8.40 2point4 Children. 9.20 Blackadder II. 10.00 Between the Lines. 11.10 The Young Ones. 11.50 Bottom. 12.30 The Paradise Club. 1.40 Sight and Sound in Concert. 2.25 Survivors. 3.20 Shopping at Night.

NBC Superchannel

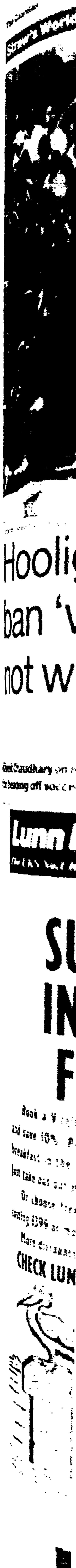
● Astra/Eutelsat

5.00 Hour of Power. 9.00 Home and Garden: Interiors by Design. 9.30 Home and Garden: Dream Builders. 10.00 Home and Garden: Gardening by the Yard. 10.30 Home and Garden: Company of Animals. 11.00 Super Shop. 12.00 Super Sports: Table Tennis. 1.00 Golf. 3.00 Super Sports: NCAA Basketball. 4.00 Time and Again. 5.00 The McLaughlin Group. 5.30 Meet the Press. 6.30 VIP. 7.00 Mr Rhodes. 7.30 Union Square. 8.00 Super Sports: Golf. 10.00 The Best of the Tonight Show with Jay Leno. 11.00 Profiler. 12.00 The Ticket. 12.30 VIP. 1.00 The Best of The Tonight Show with Jay Leno. 2.00 MSNBC Internight. 3.00 VIP. 3.30 Europe a la Carte. 4.00 The Ticket. 4.30 Talkin' Jazz. 5.00 Five Star Adventure. 5.30 The Ticket. 5.55 VIP. 6.30 The McLaughlin Group.

Discovery

● Astra/Intelsat

5.00 Wings. 6.00 Speed Demon. 7.00 The Harem of an Ethiopian Baboon. 8.00 The Quest. 8.30 Arthur C Clarke's Mysterious Universe. 10.00 Discovery Showcase. 12.30 Discovery Showcase: Riddle of the Sands. 1.00 Justice Files. 2.00 Betty's Voyage. 3.00 Close.



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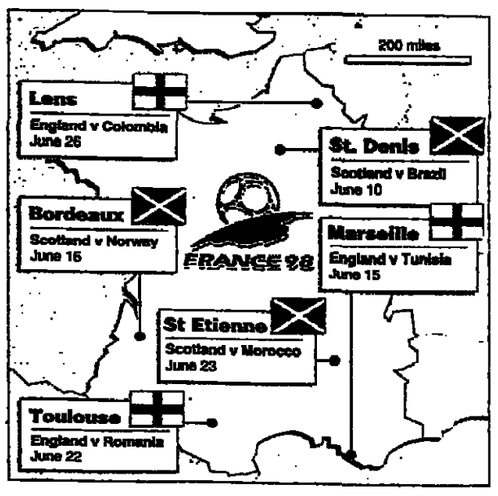
Straw's World Cup initiative cold-shouldered

Unhappy memories . . . England fans are baton-charged by Italian police during the World Cup qualifier in Rome in October

PHOTOGRAPH: BEN RADFORD



Hooligan ban 'will not work'

Vivek Chaudhary on reaction to plans for heading off soccer clashes

FOOTBALL supporters' groups have branded moves by the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, to impose more restriction orders on convicted hooligans to stop them from travelling to next summer's World Cup finals in France as "unworkable".

In a separate move, Brian Hayes, the senior Metropolitan police officer heading England's security operation for the finals, is to meet the French authorities and Fifa representatives to express concern at the limited number of tickets available to England fans.

Mr Straw said yesterday that he was writing to courts to encourage them to place restriction orders on people convicted of football hooligan offences, thereby stopping them from travelling to the World Cup finals.

Mr Straw said he was concerned that only 10 orders had been imposed since these were made available in 1989. He said: "It is for that reason that I have written to magistrates' courts, the Crown Prosecution Service, and the crown courts to remind them of the power to give restriction orders."

Under the Football Spectators Act, people convicted of football-related offences can be made the subject of orders preventing them from attending matches or travelling abroad to watch matches involving England or Wales. They must report to a police station during match times and face prosecution if they breach the order.

Alison Pilling, international officer of the Football Supporters Association, a collective body of supporters groups from around the country, claimed yesterday that Mr Straw's proposals for more orders to be issued between now and the World Cup finals did not tackle the root of the problem.

Ms Pilling said: "These new rules will apply only to people who are convicted between now and the World Cup finals, not to people who already have convictions. I think it is going to prove to be unworkable."

She added: "The real problem is organisation. The police need to be taught how to deal with the problem of a small group of hooligans when the vast majority of fans in a ground are being well-behaved."

With thousands of fans expected to travel to France without tickets, concerns are to be raised about distribution of tickets. England's final group match against Colombia takes place in Lens, less than three hours from London by train.

Brian Hayes, currently Deputy Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, who is to become the Football Association's special adviser on security, is to meet French and Fifa authorities to discuss the expected ticket shortage.

Under existing proposals, 60 per cent of tickets have been set aside for the French public and most of these have already been sold; 20 per cent are to be distributed between competing teams; and 20 per cent are for Fifa.

Mr Hayes said: "If you get a stadium holding 40,000 people, then we would only get 4,000 tickets. There are more than 20,000 members of the England Travel Club, people who have registered with the FA."

The Scotland Travel Club has 12,000 members and is similarly concerned about availability of tickets.

Mr Hayes and other FA officials, plus British police representatives, will have talks with Dominique Spinosi, a senior police officer on a three-year secondment as director of security for the organising committee, and other French security chiefs.

Mr Hayes said: "I shall be raising such matters as their general policy on ticket control, segregation, and how they are going to cope with the enormous movement of fans across the country, travelling in different directions."

Detective Inspector Peter Chapman, head of the National Criminal Intelligence Service's hooligan unit at Scotland Yard, said there was an "anomaly" over restriction orders. Police could not arrest a person until they failed to report at a police station at the appointed time. "The nonsense is I can see that individual pass through Heathrow six hours earlier, and I don't have the power to stop him."

> 'The police must learn to deal with a small group of troublemakers when most fans are well-behaved'
>
> **Alison Pilling, Football Supporters' Association**

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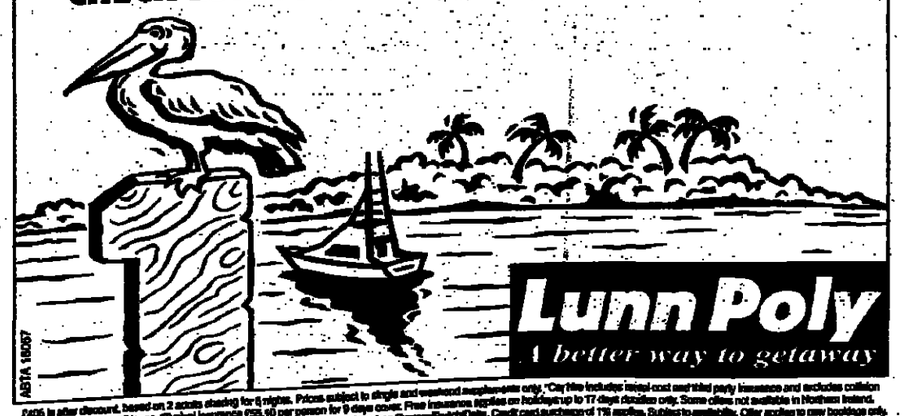

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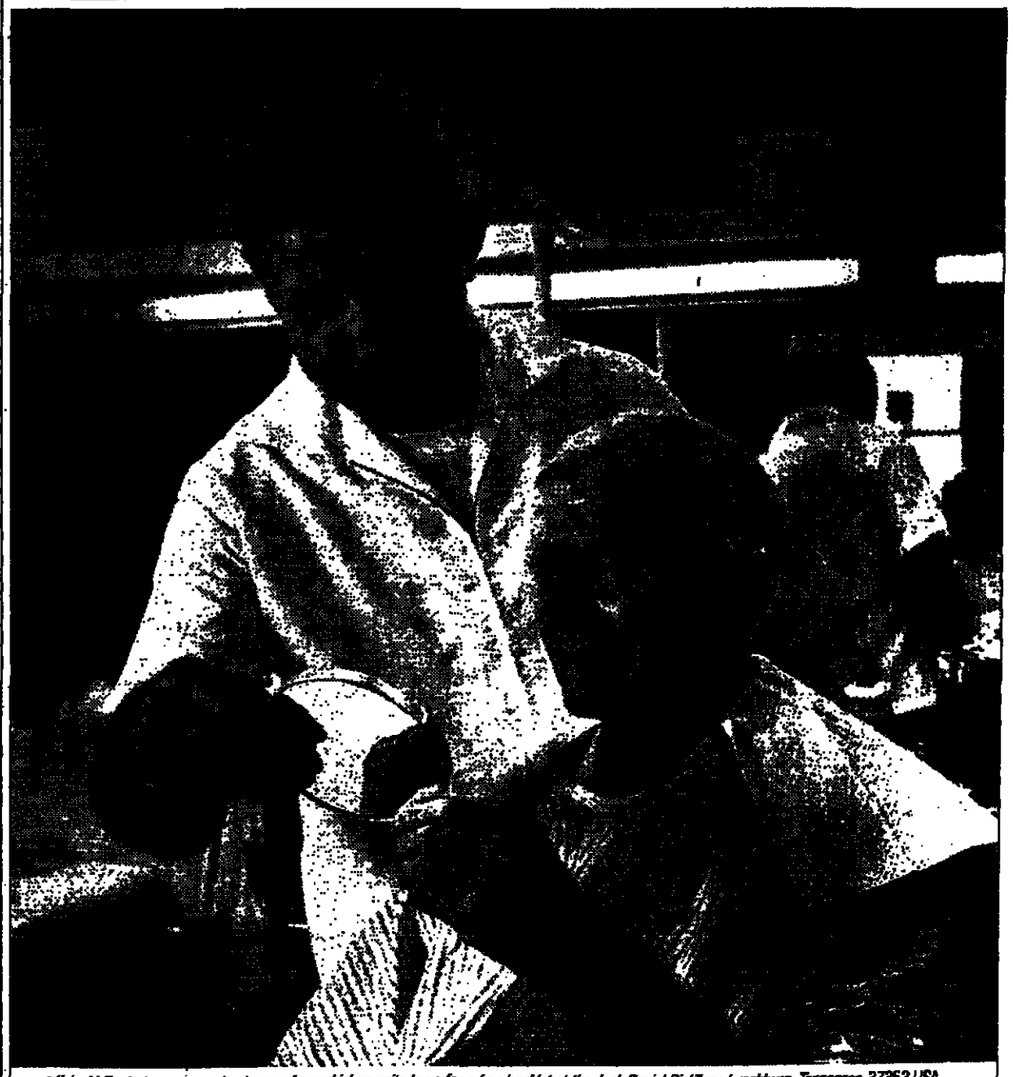

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JACK DANIEL'S TENNESSEE WHISKEY

Workmen use earth-moving equipment to inspect the damage to a pub caused by 100mph winds in Clonakilty, Co Cork yesterday PHOTOGRAPH: MIKE BROWN

6 die as holiday storms wreak havoc

THOUSANDS of householders will today start assessing the damage wrought by storms which left six people dead and many towns without power over Christmas, *writes Rory Carroll*.

The bad weather is also thought to have claimed the lives of five French fishermen who went missing in huge seas off the Welsh coast.

Electricity supplies were restored to most affected homes in Britain yesterday when gales abated, allowing emergency repairs.

North England, Wales and the Irish Republic were the areas worst hit with winds of up to 100mph. The Meteorological Office predicted blustery weather and showers but no gales for the rest of the weekend.

Insurance companies advised people with damaged roofs and waterlogged homes to get emergency repairs and contact insurers on Monday.

Gerald Ross, aged 61, his daughter, Ruth, and her boyfriend, David White, all from the Gelligaer area of Caerphilly, were killed when a 60ft tree fell on their Ford Fiesta in Pengam, near Blackwood, Gwent, early yesterday. Two other passengers with minor injuries were taken to hospital.

A 32-year-old woman from Stoke-on-Trent was killed on Christmas Eve when a tree crashed onto her car on the Wirral. And flowers have been left at the scene where a woman died and her passenger was injured in a car accident in Liverpool.

In Waterville, Co Kerry, a 19-year-old man died on Christmas Day when 100mph winds gusting in from the Atlantic toppled the wall of a disused dance hall.

Nine French fishing trawlers and a Nimrod maritime reconnaisance aircraft have resumed searching for a trawler missing off the Welsh coast. The operation began on Christmas Eve after a distress beacon was set off on the Toul an Trez, which has a five-man crew, 30 miles west of St David's Head. Wreckage of the 30-year-old wooden vessel was found in nearby waters yesterday.

It will take a number of days for repair crews from Ireland's Electricity Supply Board to restore power to 70,000 blacked-out homes. Gales knocked down 100 electricity poles in one Co Cork village alone.

In Northern Ireland efforts continued to restore electricity to several thousand homes which have been blacked out since Christmas Eve.

Probation Service gets make-over

Straw considers American restyle

Alan Travis
Home Affairs Editor

THE Probation Service is to be given a change of name and may in future be staffed by "corrections officers".

The change is part of a package being drawn up by the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, to boost the public credibility of alternatives to prison.

A US-style term, "corrections service", and the more Napoleonic-sounding "public safety officers", are among the front runners for the new name for the 90-year-old criminal justice agency presently being considered by Mr Straw.

Among chief probation officers, who are to discuss alternative names next month, the more neutral "community justice officers" has some support.

Mr Straw has told the Probation Service that its present name and the language used to describe the "community sentences" served by 133,000 offenders each year — such as probation orders, community service orders and combination orders — are confusing. He believes the terminology interferes with better public understanding of what such sentences are.

Magistrates complain that "community service" gives the misleading impression that some kind of voluntary service is involved in the sentence, while probation's "flagship" sentence of a combination order — served by some 17,000 criminals every year — means nothing at all to most people.

Mr Straw believes that the "uncomfortable truth is that even well-informed people" will quickly flounder if asked to say what the Probation Service is and what it does.

He has told the service that one major symptom of the confusion in terminology is the way the media often report that an offender sentenced to a community penalty "walked free from the court", although nobody sentenced to probation or community service ever "walks free".

He is believed to be open minded about the new name for the service, but favours reviving the old fashioned title "corrections service" despite a possible salacious *double entendre*.

The name "public safety officers" is running a strong second.

"Corrections" has a modern American overtone, but also has a history in English going back to the House of Correction of Elizabethan times — although the term has often been mixed up with chastisement, hence its association with sado-masochistic sex.

The Home Secretary also believes that the term "clients" should be banned within the service as it gives the misleading impression the officers work primarily for the benefit of the offenders rather than the public. At present the only time officers are supposed to refer to offenders as "clients" is in family court welfare cases.

The proposal to drop "probation" is expected to receive strong backing within the service. Many believe the service has outgrown the term since probation orders form only a small part of its work.

Probation officers work with the full range of community sentences, including new punishments such as electronic tagging.

They also undertake work inside prisons and prepare pre-sentence reports for the courts.

Youth hanged in his cell

Police open inquiry into death in custody on Christmas Day

Owen Bowcott

A POLICE investigation has been launched into how a boy aged 16 was found hanging in a police cell hours after being arrested for burglary on Christmas Day.

The Police Complaints Authority will supervise the inquiry into the death of David Parsons at Swansea's Cockett police station.

His body was discovered by officers at 7.10pm in a room set aside for young offenders.

South Wales police yesterday declined to say how he apparently hanged himself, or how often he had been checked. A Home Office pathologist carried out a post mortem examination yesterday. An inquest will be opened by the Swansea coroner, Richard Morgan.

David's parents, Tony and June, were being comforted yesterday by relatives at their home in Penlan, Swansea, two miles from the police station where he died.

They were too upset to talk about the death of their son, a keen footballer and Arsenal fan. A spokesman for the family said: "Obviously everyone is very distressed, and it is far too early for us to say anything.

"We are still waiting to find out exactly what happened."

The teenager's apparent suicide comes at a time of heightened concern over deaths in both police custody and prisons. He is the second young boy to die in a police station this year.

A 15-year-old boy was found dead under similar circumstances in a Hartlepool police station earlier this year.

Last year, the Police Complaints Authority investigated 48 custody deaths in England and Wales.

Deborah Coles, of the pressure group Inquest, which helps families investigate deaths of relatives in custody, said there could be no justification if the child had been left unsupervised, particularly considering the time of year.

"There should be a public inquiry into the circumstances of these two teenagers' deaths."

Alan Williams, the Swansea West MP, said: "For this tragedy to happen on Christmas Day makes it particularly difficult.

"The pressures on a youngster in custody at this time of year would have been that much greater.

"It is strange that this should have happened in a police station. I am sure that the police will be as anxious as anyone that lessons are learned to make sure that this does not happen again.

"This year there has been a record number of deaths in prisons — 69 in England and Wales."

The toll has been rising, from 41 in 1992, to 47 in 1993 and 62 last year. In the new year Sir David Ramsbotham, HM Inspector of Prisons, is to conduct an inquiry into suicides in jail.

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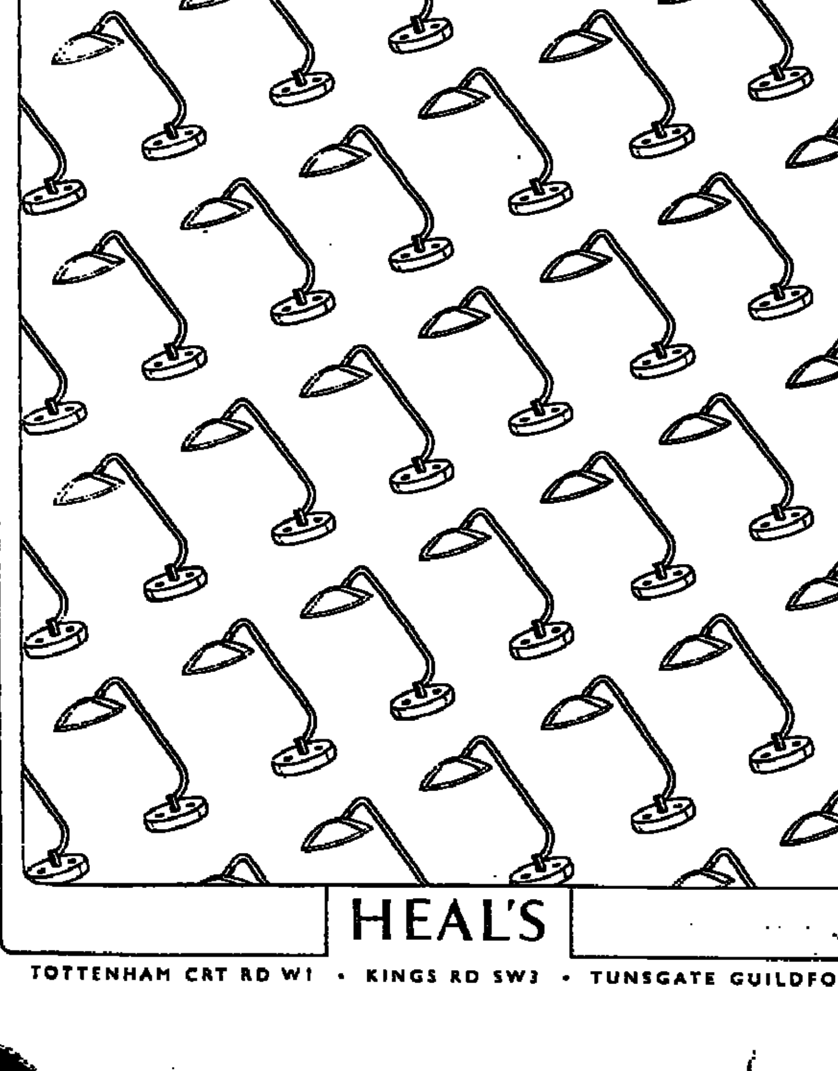

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Ethnic Albanians allege torture by Serbian police

Rebel insurgency looms in Kosovo

Karen Coleman in Pristina

"THEY beat me on the soles of my feet for about 15 minutes. I was naked. Then they moved to my legs. They asked me to stand up and then they started the electrocution. They sprayed me with water and then electrocuted me. I lost consciousness many times."

Alban Neziri, aged 23, calmly described the torture he received at the hands of the Serb police in Kosovo.

Last January police came to his flat in Pristina, the capital of the Serbian province of Kosovo, and arrested him. They then tortured him in a prison cell for four days.

Mr Neziri was one of 19 ethnic Albanians tried in a court in Pristina for terrorist activities. The trial began in October. When the verdict was delivered earlier this month 17 received sentences of up to 20 years. Mr Neziri was one of two released.

He had spent 11 months in prison. A medical student in Pristina, he said the police used torture to force him to sign a false confession saying he was a member of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and had attacked Serb police stations.

Other defendants made similar allegations of torture and false confessions, and their lawyers produced medical evidence that they had been beaten. But it was ignored at the trial.

Local Serb authorities say their courts are balanced, that their police behave fairly and that the "terrorism" of the KLA must be eradicated.

"They claim to be some national liberation army, but they are a classical terrorist group," Bosko Drobnjak, secretary of information in Kosovo, said.

The KLA is a shadowy guerrilla group which aims to "liberate" Kosovo from Serbia. So far, KLA activities have been confined mainly to attacks on police stations.

Little is known about its structure, though it appears to be small and still in its infancy, with leaders based abroad, possibly in Switzerland, Germany and Albania. In Kosovo, however, there appear to be many Albanians disaffected with the Serb regime who may be potential KLA recruits.

About 90 per cent of the population in this southern Serbian province are ethnic Albanians. But they are ruled by Serbs whose authority they refuse to recognise. Kosovo had a measure of autonomy until 1989 when it was removed by Slobodan Milosevic, then Serbia's president.

The ethnic Albanians in Kosovo are despised by many Serbs. Local people allege the Serb police randomly arrest people, beat them in prison and sometimes force them to sign false confessions admitting to KLA membership.

In the past month there have been serious standoffs between villagers and police. At the same time, the KLA has started emerging from the shadows and making public appearances.

In November three men claiming to be KLA members appeared at the funeral of Halit Geci, a teacher, aged 52, shot during a police attack on his village. All three wore uniforms. One of them, wearing a mask, told the gathering attended by thousands that the KLA would defend the people.

Local people said Serb police entered Geci's village of Laus, about an hour's drive from Pristina, on November 26 and came under fire from KLA members in the surrounding hills. A gun-battle ensued and the police sprayed bullets at houses in the village. Geci was shot at his school.

Geci has now become a martyr. His family has opened its house daily to streams of visitors from as far afield as Macedonia and Montenegro who have come to pay their respects. A black and white photograph of a young Geci stands on a table outside. Above it hangs the Albanian flag, with its red background and double-headed black eagle.

Geci's brother, Avdul, said the attack on his village was unjustified.

"It was a horrifying act done to spread fear among the population in order to drive them out of the country and to abandon the homeland."

Up the road from Geci's house, there are more stories of defiance. Sokol Zabeli's house bears the marks of the many bullets which hit it on November 26. His cow was killed. Mr Zabeli said he would never again hide in a basement from the Serbs. Instead he would "take to the forests" if the repression continued.

"What do I have to lose? I have nothing to lose ... I would simply take a gun and start shooting or simply take a gun and join any type of militant force without asking about logistics or possibilities."

Masked Islamists rally yesterday to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Islamic movement Hamas in Gaza City PHOTOGRAPH: ADEL HANA

German 'in plot to stage suicide attack in Israel'

David Sharrock in Jerusalem

A GERMAN charged with terrorism is proof that the militant Islamic group Hizbullah is recruiting would-be suicide bombers in Europe for attacks in Israel, a newspaper claimed yesterday.

The Jerusalem daily Yediot Ahoronot said Stephan Josef Smyrek, a German, aged 25, who was charged on Thursday with planning a suicide attack, was part of Hizbullah's Europe unit.

Prosecutors told an Israeli court that Mr Smyrek admitted planning a suicide attack on Haifa or Tel Aviv. But his lawyer, Daniel Assan, said after three weeks' solitary confinement without access to a lawyer or the German embassy there were reasons to doubt his confession.

The paper claimed the suicide unit was set up two years ago. Israeli security officials first learned of it during investigations into Hussein Mikdad, a Lebanese man crippled when a bomb he was preparing exploded prematurely in Jerusalem in 1996.

Mr Smyrek arrived in Israel in late November, following a stopover in Amsterdam where he was detained for several hours at the airport by Dutch police. Israel Radio claimed Mr Smyrek was known to Interpol for "terrorist" connections. But instead of being alarmed by the police attention, Mr Smyrek continued his flight to Israel. He was arrested on arrival.

The indictment said Mr Smyrek converted to Islam in 1994. Two years later, he allegedly contacted Hizbullah and travelled to Lebanon to train in the use of light weaponry and explosives.

Hizbullah denied recruiting Mr Smyrek.

A relative said: "We're sure the judges in Israel will understand that the person standing before them is not a terrorist, but a naive young man, not especially bright ... He has a police file for smoking hashish. Who doesn't smoke hashish? But only he was enough of an idiot to be arrested for it."

Motorway drivers 'bored to death'

Paul Webster in Paris

JUST before the big blue motorway signs announce the approach to Chalon-sur-Saône on the route to the Mediterranean, thousands of motorists every year sink into a potentially deadly doze, according to scientific research into a puzzling accident pattern on the A6 between Paris and Lyons.

On a slightly lesser scale, the same killer siesta overtakes drivers in two zones near Courtenay and Avallon. The three blackspots account for a sixth of all accidents along Europe's favourite holiday route and a third of all deaths.

Jean-Jacques Niccoud, the road users' representative for the toll company which operates the A6, said that until research was carried out by a specialist team from a Paris university, the accident pattern had baffled police.

"Nothing about the state of the road, mechanical conditions or psychological factors were in question," he said, after investigators analysed more than 17,000 accidents over four years.

A specialist team at René Descartes University in Paris spent a year drawing up an A6 crash chart. Analysis of accidents involving traffic entering and leaving the Paris region shows the first blackspot to be about 19 miles from the toll booths, indicating that the deadly doze usually overtakes incoming traffic after a long drive.

The graph swings wildly up and down, with daytime accidents peaking about every 25 miles before shooting up to a summit at Chalon, 220 miles south of the capital, proving that the sleep syndrome hits outgoing Paris drivers hardest after about three hours.

"The daylight rate is worst just after lunch while the night-time peak is between 4am and 8am," Gerard Veyre, the motorway's safety adviser, said. "We also found that it was the easiest sections of the motorway that were the most dangerous."

Fourteen volunteer drivers were recruited. Monitors discovered there were phases of "microsleep", when drivers dozed off for between one and four seconds at regular intervals.

Between Paris and Lyons, 265 miles, microsleep phases lasted a total of six minutes on average, equivalent to about 7½ miles of motorway at a speed of 75 miles an hour.

Authorities are expected to introduce noisy road surfaces and flashing signs to keep drivers awake.

Greek airspace 'violated' on Christmas Day despite ban

GREECE has claimed that Turkish warplanes violated its airspace over the Aegean Sea in contravention of an agreement between the countries that no military manoeuvres be held during public holidays.

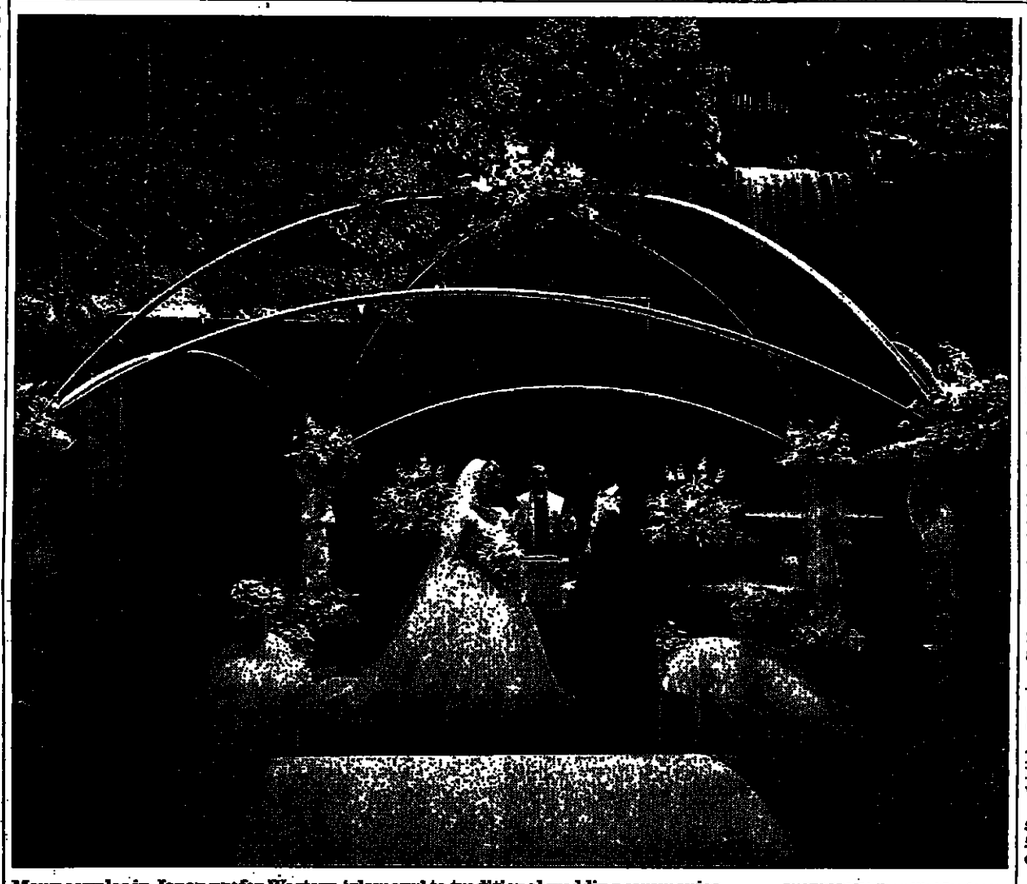
Defence ministry officials said 12 Turkish F-16s entered Greek airspace and were intercepted by Greek fighters over the islands of Lesvos and Chios.

Greek officials said it was the first time such a violation had taken place on Christmas Day since the agreement in 1988 that banned military manoeuvres in the Aegean during the summer months and on important holidays.

The Greek defence minister, Akis Tsokhatzopoulos, said Athens could not tolerate such "provocations" indefinitely. "Patience has its limits," he said.

Greece and Turkey, despite being Nato allies, have territorial disputes in the Aegean Sea and over Cyprus. They almost clashed militarily last year over an uninhabited islet in the eastern Aegean.

Tension rose this week when Ankara expelled a Greek diplomat in Istanbul on charges of spying and helping Kurdish guerrillas. Athens responded by expelling a Turkish diplomat based in the northern city of Salonika. — *Reuters.*



Many couples in Japan prefer Western 'glamour' to traditional wedding ceremonies PHOTOGRAPH: Topro Wedding Agency

A touch of Christianity helps Japanese fake the fairytale

Jonathan Watts in Tokyo

A RECENT advertisement in Japan's English-language press read: "Help Wanted: Ordained pastors and missionaries to perform weddings at hotel churches, bridal halls and restaurants. Those who are not ordained but experienced Christians are acceptable. Age from 30 up to 50."

Such adverts are testimony to the demand for Christian-style nuptials as couples increasingly reject the formality and expense of traditional Japanese weddings.

Dave Hollandi, an American teacher, aged 34, has been "marrying" couples in Hiroshima for almost two years despite never having been ordained.

"I was raised a Catholic but, to be honest, I am not very religious," Mr Hollandi said. He earns up to $1000 (£750) a weekend for performing the role of priest. He dons a white robe with a gold sash and red cross for the ceremony, but confesses to not knowing the meaning of everything he has to say.

"But I approach it with feeling and I know how to emphasise the most important bits," he said. "My goal is, make the lady cry."

A spokesperson at Youth Centre, the personnel agency that recruits him and four other part-time priests, said: "An increasing number of hotels are building chapels so they can stage Christian-style weddings, which have become more popular than traditional Japanese services in the past five to 10 years."

Less than 1 per cent of Japan's population are churchgoers, but it is estimated that almost half the country's weddings are conducted by Christian clergymen — albeit fake ones. Ten years ago, the majority of such ceremonies were held at Shinto shrines.

"It is not a case of which is better in terms of religion. What is important is which looks best," Seichi Kadowaki of the Topro wedding agency in Tokyo said. "And most young women would rather wear a white wedding dress than a heavy and expensive kimono and wig for the initial ceremony."

Japanese weddings usually involve several changes of dress and combine Eastern and Western styles. Companies such as Topro co-ordinate the purchase of wedding rings, hiring outfits and booking venues, among other details. It was a hugely profitable business at the end of the 1980s, when many Japanese people suddenly had more disposable income.

"People went really overboard," Mr Kadowaki said. "In some cases the bride and groom would enter the reception on laser-illuminated gondolas in a cloud of dry ice."

He recalled it was common for brides to change outfits four times during the wedding. Such practices are now less commonplace because of an economic slowdown.

"We are feeling the pinch. More and more couples are saying they want a simple wedding, and for a business like ours that is tough," he said, estimating that the average wedding costs 3 million yen (£13,600) — 15 per cent less than five years ago.

Toshiko Kakeuchi of the Anfusion wedding agency in Tokyo agreed that customers were trimming their budgets. But she said Christian-style weddings were seen as having the right combination of simplicity and glamour, especially if the priest was a Westerner.

"The current trend is church-style, but in most cases it is just about appearances — following America. The ceremony is very shallow," she said.

Mr Hollandi agreed. "The only thing that is really important is to get the couple's names right. That and positioning them so that when they kiss, it is all lined up for the cameras."

> 'Most women would rather wear a white wedding dress than a traditional kimono and wig for the initial ceremony'

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News in brief

Fighting resumes in Cambodia

OPPOSITION forces loyal to Cambodia's deposed co-prime minister, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, said they were under heavy attack yesterday by government troops in the border town of O'Smach after a three-day lull earlier this week.

But Thai military nearby said they had heard only light shelling across the border and the government spokesman for defence, Nieng Phat, had no information on the situation.

General Khan Savoeun said his forces in O'Smach were hit by 50 shells yesterday, and that more than 500 government troops were pushing into O'Smach from over the Thai border.

Cambodia has been plagued by factional fighting since the co-prime minister Hun Sen deposed his former coalition partner, Prince Ranariddh, on July 6. — *Reuters, Phnom Penh.*

Jailbreak ends in tragedy

NINE prisoners in a Brazilian jail died and three people they were holding hostage were injured when an escape attempt ended in car crashes and shootouts with police, news reports said.

The rebellion at the jail in the north-eastern city of Fortaleza began on Wednesday during a Christmas party, when a gang of inmates seized the hostages and police shot a prisoner dead, Globo television and news agencies said.

Police agreed to give the prisoners guns and four cars, the reports said. Two cars crashed, killing four fugitives. Police shot and killed four more prisoners. — *Reuters, Rio de Janeiro.*

Emirates caps dowries

PRESIDENT Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan of the United Arab Emirates has ratified a law that sets a ceiling on dowries and wedding celebrations, the Khaleej Times reported yesterday.

The law is aimed at encouraging marriage among nationals. It sets the maximum dowry for brides at 20,000 dirhams (about £3,500), limits wedding parties to one day and allows a maximum of nine camels to be slaughtered for the celebration.

High dowry and wedding costs have forced many Emirates men to seek foreign brides. Officials worry the native population will dwindle further if this trend continues. — *AP, Dubai.*

Iran appoints women judges

IRAN has appointed women as judges for the first time since its 1979 Islamic revolution, the Iranian news agency, IRNA, said.

It said four women lawyers were named this week as judges in family courts in Shar Rey, near Tehran. Iran passed a law in 1992 opening the way for women to sit as assistant judges in courts hearing divorce cases, but Islamic laws excluded women from positions in which they could pass judgment. — *Reuters, Tehran.*

Pedalling for world peace

TAHER Madraswala greets relatives after ending a 12-year world bicycle tour for peace. He returned to Ahmedabad in India after visiting 34 countries PHOTOGRAPH: KALPIT BHACHECH

Charity plane lands in Iraq

A PLANE chartered by an Icelandic charity landed in Iraq yesterday, bringing Christmas gifts and medicine for children hit by United Nations sanctions, the Iraqi news agency, INA, said.

Thor Magnusson, founder of Peace 2000, said the flight was an "appeal for international organisations to lift sanctions on Iraq". Stringent UN trade sanctions, including an air embargo, were imposed for its 1990 invasion of Kuwait. — *Reuters, Baghdad.*

Hong Kong acts on 'bird flu'

THE number of humans infected with bird flu rose by two yesterday, as Chinese authorities said they would tighten controls on poultry headed for Hong Kong.

The A H5N1 virus, which until this year infected only birds, has been confirmed in a three-year-old girl, who is satisfactory, and a one-year-old boy, who has recovered, officials said.

A total of 11 victims have been confirmed, of whom three have died and three recovered. Doctors do not know how people are catching the virus. Hong Kong stopped importing Chinese chickens this week as a precautionary measure. — *AP, Hong Kong.*

Mexican massacre

Suspects seized as villagers mourn

Phil Gunson in Mexico City and Reuters in Tuxtla Gutiérrez

AS MANY as 18 of the 41 suspects so far arrested for the pre-Christmas massacre at Chenalho in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas were yesterday expected to be charged with murder, possibly under organised crime laws.

Despite efforts by state and federal governments, along with the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), to evade responsibility for the killings, the opposition continues to insist that political heads must roll.

Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, the governor of Mexico City, was among leaders of the centre-left Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) calling for "the removal of the current authorities [in Chiapas], including, above all, governor [Julio Cesar] Ruiz Ferro".

Forty-five villagers were slaughtered by masked paramilitary forces two days before Christmas.

The Zapatista (EZLN) guerrilla leadership said "direct responsibility ... falls on [President] Ernesto Zedillo and the interior ministry, who two years ago gave the green light to the counter-insurgency project proposed by the federal army". They accused the government of "simulated dialogue" to "give the death squads time to prepare themselves".

The interior minister, Emilio Chuayffet, said the Zapatistas' accusations were "false and merely contribute to the creation of a climate of confusion".

Mexico has said international calls for prompt and effective action against those responsible constitute "unacceptable interference in Mexico's internal affairs".

> Most of the 45 dead, four of them pregnant, were shot in the back

The Mexican press has been baying for Mr Ruiz's head, crying negligence after a Roman Catholic priest, Gonzalo Ituarte, twice called his office with warnings as the carnage unfurled.

Mr Ruiz insisted his office alerted police in Chenalho after the first call and was told nothing was amiss. The slaughter went on for up to four hours.

As the bodies of the 45 victims, including four pregnant women, were buried on Christmas Day in two mass graves close to the scene of the massacre, it emerged that most had been shot in the back.

Meanwhile, the shattered families of Acteal, in the municipality of Chenalho, north-east of San Cristóbal de las Casas, returned to the scene of the killings accompanied by priests in a procession through rugged, coffee-growing mountains. They carried white chrysanthemums and candles for a Christmas Mass conducted over a sea of coffins in Spanish by Bishop Samuel Ruiz of San Cristóbal and in the Tzotzil Indian language by local leaders.

The families then carried out the grisly task of identifying corpses disfigured by wounds, a double set of autopsies and three days under a hot sun.

In a funeral oration, Bishop Ruiz called on the survivors "not to stumble on the rock of hatred and vengeance".

Meanwhile, the federal army, which is accused at best of inaction and at worst of complicity with the paramilitary killers, deployed 2,000 extra troops in Chenalho, according to reports from the scene.

Villagers watch as a coffin holding one of 45 Mexicans massacred on Tuesday is carried to be buried on Christmas Day PHOTOGRAPH: ORIANA ELICABE

Cubans enjoy spirit of Christmas revolution

At the Pope's request Castro has given people a break from the canefield and a taste of festivities, writes Tom Gibb in Havana

CUBANS had Christmas off for the first time in almost 30 years after President Fidel Castro agreed to a papal request. But the holiday left many younger people wondering what it was all about.

All other public holidays on the island are to mark anniversaries involving Mr Castro's 1959 revolution or independence from Spain. New year coincides with the flight of the former dictator Fulgencio Batista and so has always been celebrated.

When asked why December 25 was a public holiday, Yamilet Ramirez, aged nine, said that as January 1 was "for the triumph of the revolution", then December 25 must be for when Mr Castro left for Havana. "It was some time around then."

In a televised speech to announce the holiday, Mr Castro explained that the Christmas public holiday was abandoned after the revolution because it disrupted the sugar harvest, at its height in December.

"We realised there were traditions from Europe which had nothing to do with our country, climate and conditions," he said.

He made it clear that the holiday was a one-off gesture to Pope John Paul II, who is due to visit Cuba for the first time in January. Next year it will be back to work on the sugar harvest as normal.

Observing Christmas was never totally banned. A minority of practising Roman Catholics continued to celebrate at home and attend mass. But in the atmosphere of conflict between Church and state in the first decades of the revolution, most Cubans felt it safer to ignore the festival.

Until 1992 religious believers were not allowed to join the Communist Party and complained of being barred from university places and certain jobs.

But Cuba has undergone a religious revival during the past seven years. Churches are once again full. This year many households had Christmas trees visible from the street. But there was no public celebration, and the holiday seemed more like a quiet Sunday.

Cardinal Ortega arrives for mass at Havana Cathedral

For the first time official shops, which trade in dollars, decorated their windows to promote Christmas gift sales. The irony of state promotion was not lost on Cuba's senior Roman Catholic churchman, Cardinal Jaime Ortega.

In his midnight mass homily in Havana's old cathedral, he recalled an era when believers made sacrifices to attend mass, saying: "We have celebrated true Christmases."

Black-owned companies wish American big business a very unhappy Kwanzaa

Martin Kettle in Washington

BUSINESSES supplying festive food, toys and greetings cards were sent an unseasonal message yesterday from black Americans: you face a boycott if you continue to cash in on our Kwanzaa holiday.

The International Black Buyers and Manufacturers group said only black-owned firms should make a profit from the seven-day African-American holiday, which began yesterday and continues until January 1.

The overtly political festival was launched in San Francisco in 1966 at the height of the Black Power movement. It is marked by the lighting of red, green and black candles and by exchanging handmade, supposedly traditional, gifts.

More than 1,000 black-owned firms have called on African-Americans to boycott Kwanzaa goods that are made, marketed or sold by companies whose owners are not black. The organisation says such practices are "arrogantly exploitative of the culture of African people".

> 'They can sell what they want, but we can buy from whom we want'

One member, Ayo Handy-Clary, said: "We feel it is not business as usual for people of other races and cultures to market our culture and sell it back to us."

But stores protested that they were only responding to customer demand and would be criticised if they did not sell Kwanzaa goods.

In the United States "politically correct" end-of-year holiday culture, references to Christmas are now carefully balanced with those to Hannukah and Kwanzaa and the all-embracing term "Happy Holidays".

A Swahili word meaning first fruits, Kwanzaa has no traditional African roots but has served as a focus for some black Americans to honour their African origins. It is now also promoted in the Caribbean, Canada and Britain.

Colgate-Palmolive, one of the companies criticised yesterday, has an advertisement for toothbrushes which says "Best wishes for a happy and healthy Kwanzaa".

"These companies have the right to sell what they want," said one black retailer. "But we also have the right to buy from whom we want."

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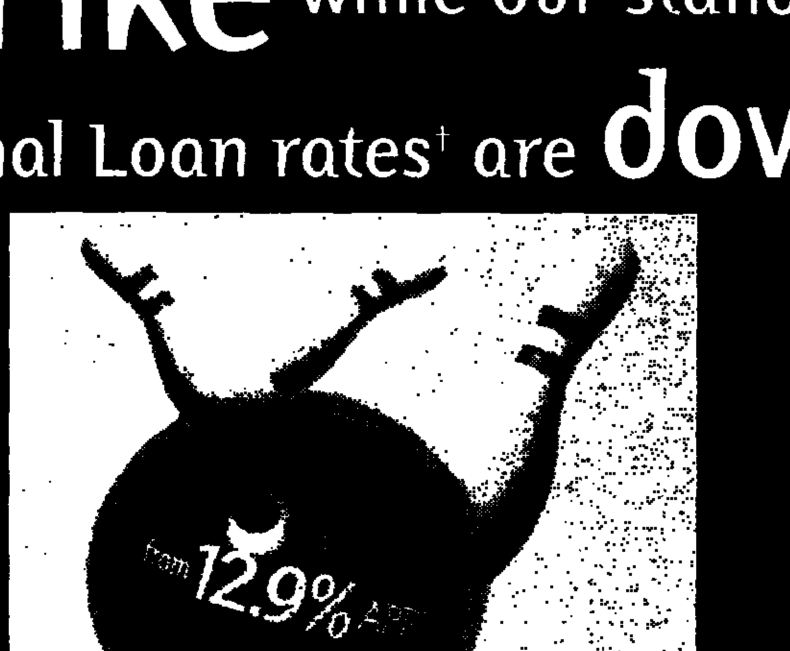

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Toshiro Mifune

Legacy of the samurai

Once upon a time in the east . . . Toshiro Mifune in his most famous role, as the would-be warrior in The Seven Samurai

THE powerful, athletic and handsome Toshiro Mifune, who has died aged 77, was the engine-room of 16 of Akira Kurosawa's pictures, and because of them became the best-known Japanese actor outside Japan since Sessue Hayakawa made it in Hollywood in the silent era. The popularity of Kurosawa, the most celebrated of all Japnese film directors in the West, probably derives from his films' greater proximity to American movies than those of his contemporaires. Three of them (*Rashomon*, *The Seven Samurai* and *Yojimbo*) were transformed into Westerns while the crossover occurred in reverse with adaptations from Shakespeare (*Macbeth* as *Throne of Blood*), Dostoevsky (*The Idiot*), Gorky (*The Lower Depths*), Dashiel Hammett (*Yojimbo*) and Ed McBain (*The Bad Sleep Well*).

The partnership between Kurosawa and Mifune (10 years younger than the director) began in 1948 and lasted until 1965 when there was a falling out, the reason for which both always refused to discuss.

Born to Japanese parents in Tsingtao, China, Mifune served in the Japanese army during the second world war, working as an aerial photographer. He then entered the Toho film studio intending to work as a cameraman, but was given a small part in Kajiro Yamamoto's *The Foolish Times* (1946). But it was Kurosawa's *Drunken Angel* (1948) that made Mifune a star. He played a young gangster who comes to a doctor's surgery one night to have a bullet removed, but is discovered to have TB. Although Kurosawa's first important film has been compared with the Italian Neo-Realists, it comes closer to a Warner Bros' gangster film of the 1930s, the James Cagney role being taken by Mifune. He certainly had Cagney's anger, swagger and bravado.

The following year, in *The Quiet Duel*, Kurosawa allowed him to show a sensitive side as an idealistic doctor, who contracts syphilis from the blood of a patient. Treating himself in secret and tormented by his conscience and his celibacy, he rejects his fiancée without explanation.

Rashomon (1950), the first Japanese film to be shown widely in the West, saw Mifune playing a cynical bandit who kills a samurai and rapes his wife. At the subsequent trial, the incident is described in four conflicting versions, demonstrating the subjective nature of truth. (It became a Paul Newman Western, *The Outrage*, in 1964.)

In 1954 Mifune gave his most famous perfomance in Kurosawa's universally acclaimed *The Seven Samurai* (which would spawn *The Magnficent Seven* in 1960). As the wild, loud-mouthed would-be samurai, he revealed what an extraordinary actor he was, ranging from slapstick comedy to genuine pathos. When he is unmasked as a farmer's son and not a nobleman as he claimed, he delivers an unforgettably emotional speech to the warriors.

In *I Live in Fear* (1955), Mifune was a prosperous businessman who decides to emigrate to Brazil with his large family because he believes that the effects of nuclear war will be less there. Playing a much older man, he's quirky in the satirical first half and a tragic Lear-like figure towards the end.

However Mifune was more often seen and appreciated as a samurai, whether the Japanese Macbeth in *Throne of Blood* (1957), said to be T S Eliot's favourite film, grotesquely humorous in *The Hidden Fortress* (1958), or splendidly heroic in *Yojimbo* (1961) for which he won the best actor prize in Venice. (The latter became *A Fistful of Dollars* with a more impassive Clint Eastwood in the Mifune role.) *Sanjuro* (1962) was the nearest Kurosawa came to spoofing the samurai genre, an eastern Western with Mifune fighting corruption with a sword in his hand and a tongue in the cheek.

The last film Mifune made for Kurosawa, *Red Beard* (1965), won him another acting award at Venice. As an aging autocratic doctor who teaches a young intern the rewards of healing the poor in 19th-century Japan, he gave another powerhouse portrayal in the title role. Mifune was never as impressive for other directors. In Kenji Mizoguchi's masterful *The Life of Oharu* (1952), he played a man from the lower classes who falls for the daughter of a samurai and is beheaded for his audacity.

In 1963 Mifune formed his own production company, Mifune Productions, for which he directed *The Legacy of the 500,000*, a period film that failed at the box office. Although he could barely speak English, he appeared in a number of American-produced movies in the 1960s and 1970s, in which little use was made of his talent. These included John Frankenheimer's *Grand Prix* (1966), in which he was a Japanese car manufacturer, and *Midway* (1976) where he played Admiral Yamomoto. The one decent role he had in the West was as a Japanese naval commander stranded on a Pacific atoll with Lee Marvin as an American pilot in John Boorman's *Hell in the Pacific* (1969).

Television audiences also became familiar with Mifune as Lord Toranaga in the American series *Shogun* (1980), adapted from James Clavell's novel. But to see the best of Toshiro Mifune, who is survived by two sons, one has to go back to the Kurosawa films and his dynamic presence in them.

Ronald Bergan

Toshiro Mifune, actor, born April 1, 1920; died December 24, 1997

David Schramm

Cosmology's own high energy star

PROFESSOR David Schramm, who has died aged 52 in an air crash near Denver, Colorado, at the controls of his own plane, was a brilliant high energy physicist and cosmologist who sought to unify the high energy and nuclear physics of the birth of the universe. He was widely regarded as the late 20th century's academic supernova of cosmology.

Schramm, who was head of physics at the University of Chicago and chairman of the department of astronomy and astrophysics, was a giant of a man with a personality larger than life and a huge mind and grasp. He had 15 years experience as a pilot and frequently flew from Chicago to Aspen, 150 miles west of Denver. The town was his second home and is the site of the Aspen Physics Centre in whose high-level gatherings he was deeply involved.

Schramm's international scientific fame rests on work carried out over the past two decades, in which he unravelled aspects of the very early evolution of the universe. The Big Bang, the so-called singularity of infinite smallness, temperature and mass, lies beyond the understanding of established physics. But the first second of time does not.

Schramm . . . innovative

While earlier cosmological studies had investigated the formation of the elements and the roles of fusion and fission in the interchanges between mass and energy, these events cannot begin until the primordial fireball has cooled to about 100 million degrees — about a minute and a half after the evolution of the universe began. During the first seconds, the components from which elements are structured — the proton, neutron, electron and so on — simply do not exist. During its first seconds the universe was a seething and mysterious ball of sub-atomic particles.

Schramm, trained as a high energy physicist, sought to pull back the veil of mystery on these first sub-atomic seconds, following the evolution of interaction of particles at enormous energies and tracking evolution through to the point at which elements began to be formed. This grand unifying tour-de-force startled and revolutionised the worlds of cosmology and astrophysics because of its huge scale and the possibilities and limits that were revealed. Applying meticulous rigour, Schramm used the concepts in another and highly innovative way.

By the end of the 1970s, sub-atomic particles were seen to exist in three families, each comprising three forms of quarks, three kinds of light particles (leptons) with their associated neutrinos, and the particles which, like the gluons, hold the quarks together in the form of matter. At that time 36 particles had been identified and it seemed that there might be many more to discover.

Schramm's meticulous analysis and calculation set, for the first time, a limit on this number. He transformed a former area of speculation into a reasoned hypothesis showing that there could be no more than four types of quark with their associated particles. He was also able to put probability boundaries on the character of the missing quark group, allotting them substantial and specific mass.

Within a few years, teams working at Chicago and at the European Centre for Nuclear Physics (CERN) at Geneva, found tantalising evidence of a quark whose mass appears to be about that of a silver atom, absolutely within the boundaries defined by Schramm. This research, continuing at the world's most powerful high energy physics centres, may complete the eerie picture of sub-atomic matter.

Schramm, an enthusiast for almost every kind of outdoor activity, continually challenged the established pundits. He was a US government science adviser, a great teacher and a skillful expositor of science to lay audiences. At a recent meeting he described cosmology as undergoing transformation from speculative theory to information-based interpretation. This, in fact, is the transformation which he has driven and it has changed the world of thought.

Born in St Louis, David Schramm took his first degree in 1967 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and his doctorate at Caltech in 1971, where he remained for a further year as a research fellow until becoming assistant professor of astrophysics at the University of Texas at Austin. In 1977, his brilliance and huge personality already becoming a legend, he was appointed professor of astronomy and astrophysics at the Enrico Fermi Institute, Chicago, and professor of physics at Chigago University. In recent scientific work he sought to marry elementary particle physics and nuclear physics in the understanding of supernovae and black holes.

Professor Schramm was a determined loner, a mountaineer, passionate skier and a brilliant athlete of science, winning arrays of awards.

His first marriage ended in divorce in 1979. He is survived by his second wife, Judith, whom he married in 1986, and by two sons.

Anthony Tucker

David Norman Schramm, physicist, born October 25, 1945; died December 19, 1997

Face to Faith

Found in the depths of time

Jo Ind

THE images that come to mind for the New Year are of a calendar being flipped over and the line in my cheque book where I must remember to write the new digit. Then I find myself doing mental arithmetic and speculating that if I die at the same age as my mother, I've had almost two-thirds of my life, with about another 6,935 days left to go. I end up playing with figures because, to me, that's all that the New Year is — a change in our way of numbering. There is no cosmic reason why the day we call January 1 should be considered the start of the year.

The ancient Greeks celebrated New Year on December 21, the winter solstice. The ancient Egyptians marked the autumn equinox, September 21, as the beginning of the year, the Celts began again on November 1 and the Treasury uses April 6. In fact it was not until 1753 that Protestant Britain reluctantly adopted the Gregorian calendar, and conceded that January 1 would be the day when we would declare the year to be new. By contrast, the date when we celebrate Christmas — just after the winter solstice in the northern hemisphere — is for me all part of its meaning.

Long before Christ, Europeans felt a need to honour the gods during the season when they were shrouded in darkness, and feared at a primitive level that the sun would abandon them completely. In the days of the Roman Empire, December 25 was known as the Birthday of the Unconquered Sun, celebrating the belief that Saturn, god of agriculture, had overthrown his boss Jupiter. In Persia, fires were lit to Mithras, the god who represented the light of day and the bright heavens.

In establishing Christendom, the church had to decide whether to outlaw these festivals or appropriate them and turn December 25, and all that went with it, into Christmas. It wisely decided on the latter and by using Christ's names — the Light of the World and the Sun of Righteousness — neatly connected the Christian idea of the coming of the Son of God with earlier understanding of our place in the solar system.

By celebrating Christmas at that point in the year when the days start to lengthen again, we remind ourselves of that primal knowledge. The other thing that Christmas has over the New Year is a great story. The mythologist Joseph Campbell says that myths, of which the Christmas story is one, are clues to what we know and experience within. Myths and dreams come from the same place; the deepest parts of us find an expression in symbolic form. They show us how to live, evoke in us a sense of awe and an understanding of the way the universe is.

At Christmas we get into a good myth as we put up the holly, and gaze at the angel on top of the Christmas tree. But at New Year there is no yarn to enjoy. It is not the same for everybody; the Scots have their ritual of first-footing. But this is not my tradition. All I have is Big Ben, kissing strangers and an "auld" song, whose lyrics I don't understand.

The contrast between the two events gives us insight into Campbell's point. Both are about new beginnings — the New Year with its change of date, and Christmas with its celebration of a baby. But Christmas is more helpful than the New Year in understanding how new life comes. At New Year, the beginning we celebrate is entirely of our own making. The date changes, and we decide that things are going to be different from now on. We grit our teeth, make our resolutions, and resolve to make a fresh start. But it doesn't work like that, as anybody who has lit a cigarette or sworn at the children by January 3 will know.

By contrast, the Christmas story gives us a profound insight into the nature of new life, namely that it isn't completely up to us, and we can't decide in advance what it is going to be like. Rather, we follow the star of our hopes and dreams and discover new life as a gift in a place we had not expected.

Both festivals are about time, but in very different ways. Without a story to enter into, New Year seems linear and one-dimensional. Life is a diary with a finite number of entries and eternity is a never-ending year planner. Christmas, on the other hand, is returning year after year to the same story. Eternity does not appear as a never-ending sameness, but another realm from which to live more completely in the here and now.

Jo Ind is a journalist for the Birmingham Post and author of Fat Is A Spiritual Issue

Weekend Birthdays

WHEN the history of that elusive institution, "the traditional family", is finally pieced together, writer and journalist **Polly Toynbee**, 51 today, will warrant a small footnote, albeit for the wrong reasons. A long-time advocate of social reform, she fell foul of the tabloids last year after a spirited exchange on divorce with the Observer's Melanie Phillips. The topside arguments were clear enough — Toynbee argued that divorce was not a social disaster; Phillips maintained that easier divorce undermined the family. But the Daily Mail smelled hypocrisy because of Toynbee's involvement with a married man, and went for her. Characteristically, she made a pre-emptive strike, exposing the Mail's methods before they ran the story, and came out on top.

It was the sort of spirited response the Mail might have expected from such a solid adversary. The daughter of journalist Philip Toynbee, and granddaughter of historian Arnold, Toynbee learned early on how to stand up for her beliefs. Raised in a comfortably middle-class extended family, she ran away from boarding school and left Oxford early to write, firstly a novel, then a study of the drudgery of women's work. She's been advocating the best of 1960s values ever since.

Dismissed as an archetypal feminist intellectual during the Thatcher years, she is now edging into great-and-good status — last summer she joined the Government's inquiry into failures in the breast-cancer screening programme. Her views on that may be less radical than on divorce but they'll be equally firm and well-argued.

Today's other birthdays: **Irene Adams**, Labour MP, 50; **Anne Armstrong**, former US ambassador to Britain, 70; **John Charles**, footballer, 66; **Gerard Depardieu**, actor, 49; **Pat Moss**, rally driver, 63; **Prof Donald Northcote**, plant biochemist, 76; **Mike Pender**, rock singer, 55; **Sir William Purves**, chairman, Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, 66; **Peter Quaife**, rock musician, 54; **Prof Brinley Rees**, classical scholar, 78; **Sir Norman Reid**, former director, Tate Gallery, 82; **Dr Edward Salthouse**, master, University College, Durham, 62; **David Shepherd**, cricket umpire, 57; **Lord Sterling**, chairman, P & O, 63; **Janet Street-Porter**, broadcaster, 51; **Rt Rev Michael Turnbull**, Bishop of Durham, 62.

Tomorrow's birthdays: **Terry Butcher**, football manager, 39; **Donald Carr**, cricket umpire, 71; **Sandra Faber**, American astronomer, 53; **Max Hastings**, editor, London Evening Standard, 52; **Lord (Roy) Hattersley**, former deputy leader, Labour Party, 65; **Nigel Kennedy**, violinist, 41; **Frances Morrell**, former leader, Ilea, 60; **Bridget Prentice**, MP, government whip, 45; **Simon Raven**, author, playwright, 70; **Joan Ruddock**, Labour MP, 54; **Dame Maggie Smith**, actress, 63; **Richard Sudhalter**, jazz musician, 59; **Rt Rev Bill Westwood**, broadcaster and former Bishop of Peterborough, 72.

Death Notices

CRANSTONE, Isabel May. Widow of Bryan, sister of Audrey, Joan and Hugh, and much loved mother of David, peacefully in Sobell House on 22nd December 1997, aged 90 years. The funeral service will take place on Tuesday 30th December at 3.15pm in the Memorial Chapel, Oxford Crematorium. Flowers may be sent, or if desired, donations for Sobell House, c/o Reeves & Pain, 298 Abingdon Road, Oxford OX1 4TE.

KERSHAW, Arnold Fenton. On December 21st 1997 peacefully in hospital and of New Moston, Arnold aged 94 years. Beloved husband of the late Elsie, dearly loved dad of Harold, much loved brother of Edith and Cyril, dear grandad of Sara and Nicholas also a great grandad. Service will take place at St. Chads Church, New Moston on Monday 29th December at 10.15am, prior to committal at Blackley crematorium at 11.30am. Family flowers only please, donations to if desired to Manchester Royal Eye Hospital. Arrangements by Landsdowne Family Funeral Home, 187 Kenyon Lane, Moston, to whom all enquiries should be directed. Tel: 0161 682-6354.

OSBORNE, Heather. Following her tragic death in Italy on December 11th 1997. Heather's funeral will be at St. George's Church, New John Street West at Newtown, Birmingham at 1pm on Tuesday December 30th. Donations if desired to King Edward's Foundation Trust Fund for pupils' foreign travel.

Engagements

CROOKS/RHODES. David and Sara are pleased to announce their engagement to be married.

■To place your announcement telephone 0171 713 4567 or fax 0171 713 4129 between 9am and 5pm Mon-Fri.

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

THE MADONNA reproduced on the Women's page (G2, Page 5), December 23, was by Antonello da Messina.

A PHOTO caption on Page 10 of Guardian Sport, December 22, identified one of the horses as Crack On and said it won at Ascot last Saturday. Crack On was a non-runner. The horse in the picture was Chief's Song, which did win.

IN AN article about people with birthdays on December 25, the jazz singer and band leader, Cab Calloway, was mistakenly listed among current members of "this exclusive club". He is a past member. He died on November 18, 1994.

It is the policy of the Guardian to correct errors as soon as possible. Readers may contact the office of the Readers' Editor, Ian Mayes, by telephoning 0171 239 9589 between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Fax: 0171 239 9897. E-mail: reader@guardian.co.uk

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Setting up a sensation

But expose the exposers too

WELL over a million young people have tried cannabis. All over Britain in pubs, clubs and parties young people are exchanging soft drugs every night. The Government knows that. The police know that. Wise officers turn a blind eye because they are aware of the devastating consequences once young people are caught up in the criminal justice system. Cannabis convictions rose from 18,000 to 70,000 in the last decade, but if vigilant patrols were made the numbers would fill every prison cell. Few issues have received more media attention. And yet, when a so-called ace investigative reporter from the Mirror receives a telephone call from a tipster that schoolboys are exchanging cannabis, she is "shattered". She was told to watch a pub "and watch this bloke" because she would be amazed at what happens.

Boldly, she goes to the pub where far from just watching (could it be that nothing was happening?), she engages the bloke in chat. Surprise, surprise after half an hour "the subject of drugs was raised". Could it possibly have been raised by the ace reporter herself? Surprise, surprise "the chat" turns to cannabis. The bloke, amazingly, knows the difference between hash and grass. Where's she been? Later she alleges the bloke offered to sell her some cannabis. He didn't have any on him but he goes away and comes back with less than two grams — sufficient for no more than a few joints. He allegedly asks for £10. This was no dealer at work but a 17-year-old schoolboy. He was not looking for customers by the reporter's own words, she looked for him. He didn't even have any on him when she started chatting him up. He had to go out and find her some. At £10 for the package, he will hardly have made a big profit. And yet the story filled five pages of the Christmas Eve issue and five more in the Mirror yesterday. Why? Alas, the schoolboy is the son of a senior cabinet minister.

In a feature dripping with nauseating hypocrisy, the Christmas Eve edition declared there was no intention to identify the boy. Indeed, there are very stern laws preventing papers identifying juvenile offenders — laws which the Mirror may well have broken by the many identifying facts it set out. By yesterday, an equally nauseating editorial declared the investigation had been pursued with no intention of publication. Two reporters — and no doubt lots of tapes and even hidden photographers — were sent just so the father could be informed. Phoey. Why did they publish then? Because the father went to the police. What else could the father do once he knew a tacky tabloid had "something" on his son? A paper which descends to such shabby tricks as prying on famous people's children can't seriously expect to be trusted.

Like many young people of his age, the boy was being foolish not least in trusting the good intentions of a stranger. But compare the folly of the adolescent with the cold-hearted calculation of a sleazy tabloid team. Certainly there ought to be an investigation but it should concentrate on whether the reporters committed entrapment — and whether the Mirror breached the newspaper privacy code.

Zambia spirals down

Jailing Kenneth Kaunda is no answer

IT IS BEYOND belief that Kenneth Kaunda, the veteran statesman of Zambia, should have been involved in the comic opera coup staged by a certain Captain Solo at the end of October. The coup failed after the plotters got drunk on a fridge full of Windhoek beer, while their leader made an incoherent four hour speech. Since then the hardliners around President Frederick Chiluba have used the failed coup to purge many opponents — including some within their own ruling Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD). Taken into custody on Christmas Day, Mr Kaunda joins another 90 opposition figures detained since the coup. He was not initially charged, but the state of emergency declared by Mr Chiluba allows the police to detain people for up to four weeks — and longer by presidential order.

Mr Kaunda, once the respected father of his country's independence, was voted out of office in 1991 by Zambians after his discredited one-party system had brought about a stagnant economy and had dashed hopes of development. The story of his rise and fall was remarkable not least because he accepted defeat with a good grace, handed over leadership and withdrew from public life. 'You are now the Father of the State," he told Mr Chiluba. "God bless you and goodbye." What is even more remarkable is the way in which he returned to politics. The Zambian economy under the guidance of Mr Chiluba who in turn acted on the advice of the country's international creditors failed to improve. Almost 80 per cent of the population remains beneath the poverty line: there is widespread malnutrition and infant mortality. Privatised industries have ended up in the pockets of leading MMD supporters. Last year Mr Chiluba was re-elected in flawed elections after barring Mr Kaunda — who was unlikely to win anyhow — on a technicality apparently invented to exclude him. This precipitated an aid squeeze from foreign donors, while many Zambians who at first welcomed Mr Chiluba as a democratic breath of fresh of air now fear his increasingly dictatorial behaviour.

Zambia's tale is the sorry and familiar one of many developing countries and the vicious circle in which they are caught. Independence was gained with a low level of political culture: democracy was undermined by one-party rule: distorted socialist prescriptions were applied to the economy. The mould is broken with the ending of the cold war: democracy is re-invented: the international monetary institutions have an open field for their own economic prescriptions. Then comes disillusion and a new search for scapegoats. Democracy proves defective and extremely expensive, as next Monday's Kenyan elections — where the ruling Kanu party has spent hugely to ensure victory — will show. Corruption grows and income differentials widen while the victims of this whole process are, as always, the despairing people.

How to break out of this vicious circle is the biggest challenge for most of the developing world. It is pointless to pick out single targets for blame — whether it be "African politics" or the IMF. For Zambia, there is even less chance of finding a way unless Mr Chiluba can defuse tension by releasing the predecessor who once wished him well.

Letters to the Editor

Your welfare at heart

THE anti-Labour spleen vented by George Watson (Labour's welfare lie, December 24) sets out to show that the party and the Labour movement generally were always against a welfare state; according to him this was because there was no desire to humanise capitalism but to abolish it.

The facts about welfare speak differently; Beatrice Webb's minority report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Law in 1909 recommended national agencies to deal with poverty and other much needed reforms. The proposals were far too radical for the Liberal government.

In 1922, for instance, the party's election manifesto for the London county council set out a programme of reforms in the capital, including municipal management and control of medical and welfare services, instead of provision through the hated Poor Law.

Likewise, the Socialist Medical Association carried out a continuous campaign for a national health service, which of course Nye Bevan, as Minister of Health, was to bring into existence, despite bitter opposition and personal abuse from the British Medical Assoc-iation, as well as strenuous Tory opposition.

Watson writes that the Labour leadership at the time did not want state welfare provision because of their desire to do away with capitalism. It will, I think, come as somewhat of a surprise to learn that Attlee, Morrison, Bevin and co were such dedicated potential revolutionaries that only a pure socialist state would satisfy them!

In fact, in early 1942, the national executive of the Labour Party published The Old World And The New Society, which set out proposals for comprehensive state reforms for full employment and services to secure adequate health, welfare and care. As for the Beveridge Report itself, proposing a system of social security for all, the recommendations were welcomed unanimously by the national executive in December 1942. When the report was debated in the Commons early in the following year it led to a backbench Labour revolt, calling for immediate implementation of the proposals; the Labour leadership were then in the war-time coalition Churchill government. But virtually every backbench Labour MP voted for the amendment. All this hardly adds up to the scenario painted by Mr Watson.
David Winnick MP.
House of Commons,
London SW1A 0AA.

ANYONE with even the most cursory knowledge of the political thought of William Morris knows that he did not advocate compulsory labour for the unemployed, as George Watson seems to think. What Morris did say in the pamphlet, Useful Work Versus Useless Toil, was that under the current system of wage slavery, it would be understandable if some workers refused to work and, as a consequence, ended up in the workhouse or prison.

His essay was a refutation of the "semi-theological dogma that all labour, under any circumstances, is a blessing to the labourer", a dogma close to the heart of Harriet Harman and New Labour.
Mark Pedlar.
5 Milton Terrace,
Leeds LS6 3JA.

GEORGE Watson's article was a salutary look at history and the Labour Party. I hope it will be read by those who suggest that New Labour is ignorant of such matters. The fact surely is that our welfare system has "just growed" with no over-riding philosophy; it is very clear that the major social reforms of the Attlee government were cross-party in origin.

The change in education was the Butler Act, social welfare came from Beveridge and so on. This meant that the reforms were generally accepted and have survived. Thus there is no specifically Labour ownership of social welfare.
Ian Hamilton.
1 Albert Road,
Richmond TW10 6DJ.

NOT a word is a said about how difficult it is for the "disabled" to get employment because of the lousy provisions made for the education and training of disabled people. I have been confined to a wheelchair since childhood, and it has been very difficult.

There are 6.5 million disabled people in Britain. Parents of disabled children do not have the automatic right to send their children to the local school. Only 0.3 per cent of higher education students are disabled. Disabled people are three times more likely to be unemployed.

Let us look back to the origin of the Disability Living Allowance: as part of the post second world war settlement, the disabled were given wheelchairs and invalid trikes. The Thatcher government found trikes too expensive to maintain and came up with a good wheeze: give them a mobility allowance and encourage them to buy their own cars. Then they replaced the Mobility Allowance with an all-embracing Disability Living Allowance (DLA). It is this which is under threat.

What they don't noise abroad is that many were deliberately put on DLA to get them off the unemployment register. Now New Labour proposes to cut into those receiving DLA.
Robert Giddings.
12 St Peters Road,
Poole BH14 0PA.

Go on, spin in out: since when was the Mail Labour's friend?

AFTER reading Alastair Campbell's unfavourable comparison of the Guardian with the Daily Mail (Letters, December 24), I realised how quickly and completely times have changed.

In the summer of 1995 I attended a meeting at the Central Hall, Westminster, along with many other Labour councillors, where Tony Blair reminded us that, until the general election, we were the power base of the party and must assume responsibility for its reputation.

The plea was for our individual and collective caution in order to prevent the party's denigration by the, largely Conservative controlled, press.

During the pre-Tony warm-up by Frank Dobson and others, we were regaled with tales about the evils of the Tory press. In particular the Daily Mail was described as the newspaper to be read in order to "know the enemy". In contrast, the Guardian was described as a friend and to be relied upon for the truth.

Surely the members of the party have a right to know when, precisely, it was considered that the erstwhile friend and former enemy of the Labour movement swapped sides and what rigorous evidence there is of this happening. I, for one, do not intend to cancel my subscription to the dear old Grauniad and will continue to rely on you for an analysis of the real world as opposed to one contrived by spin doctors.
Cllr John P Beavis.
36 Priestfields,
Rochester,
Kent ME1 3AG.

THANKS for printing Alastair Campbell's seasonal message to Labour supporters. Time and cancelled subscriptions will show whether or not the troops are anxious and bewildered. Telling them that they are too stupid to separate fact *from* opinion will cheer them up no end.
Ann Black.
88 Howard Street,
Oxford OX4 3BE.

WHY does he rise to the bait like a demented trout every time? Perhaps he needs a press advisor.
Ian Charlton.
11 Oxford Road,
Wakefield WF1 3LB.

WHAT a cruel hoax — and how odd that you should have been taken in. It must be hurtful in the extreme for Mr Campbell to think that readers might get the idea he would really write something so absurd. Party members taken in by it are probably queuing even now to resign.

Please reassure us by announcing an inquiry to expose the trickster. Step out of the closet, Bel Littlejohn!
Colin Farlow.
10 Grisedale Crescent,
Egglescliffe,
Cleveland TS16 9DS.

Genes don't fit

CONGRATULATIONS to the Guardian for being the only mainstream paper bold enough to challenge the biotech companies' propaganda about genetically modified foods (Reports, December 15 to 19).

Professor A D Bradshaw (Letters, December 18) has unfortunately fallen for the propaganda when he says that plant breeders have been hybridizing crops for centuries and that genetically modified foods are not fundamentally different. This, as any geneticist who does not have a vested interest will tell you, is untrue.

In hybridization, nature places boundaries around the amount of genetic modification that is possible. Only slightly different versions of genes already present in the plant to be modified can be substituted. The two plants to be cross-fertilised must be fairly closely related. If the host gene is too different, it doesn't work.

The gene splicing of the geneticist, on the other hand, can substitute very different genes in the host plant that would not be allowable in the natural course of things. So we have, as an example, tomatoes spliced with fish. The results of such odd marriages are unpredictable.

Moreover, the splicing process is far less precise than pro-modification geneticists would have us believe. It would be simpler if nature had arranged things so that one gene expressed one characteristic, but as experimentation has shown, one gene can express a number of different and unpredictable characteristics.

As with pesticides, drugs, and BSE, the scientists are flying blind; those who pretend to know the consequences are motivated by commercial reasons.
Claire Robinson.
20 Middlewood,
Skelmersdale,
Lancs WN8 6SR.

Hill farmers hit a rocky patch

OKEHAMPTON beef farmer, John Hodge, not unnaturally omits in his interview (Way of life under threat on the high hills, December 23) the indisputable fact that hill farmers have been ruining Dartmoor for decades by:

☐ Severe over-grazing;
☐ Moorland drainage, which kills off all heather by stimulating bracken growth;
☐ "Swaling", that is, legal heather-burning up until April 1 each year but which has been carried on after that date by many farmers.

All this destruction — yet Dartmoor bog has failed to grow for some centuries now.

As for Mr Hodge's comment that the more business taken out of the villages, "the quieter the countryside will get", I can only welcome Jack Cunningham's restructuring of farming if that is going to be the result.

The vision of Dartmoor as a true wilderness, which Mr Hodge predicts if livestock are withdrawn from it, is something very many others might welcome, especially if they are conservationists, like me.
Tony Hills,
Middlecott Cottage,
Morchard Bishop,
Crediton,
Devon EX17 6RW.

AS A hill farmer, I am deeply grateful for Mr Cunningham's suggestion that I should consider early retirement (One-off £85m for beef farmers, December 23). However, as I am not only a producer of organic beef, milk and vegetables but also a consumer, I fear I may live to a great age and thus become a huge burden on the Government.

Instead of clearing farmers off their beloved land in search of welfare, should Mr Cunningham not be promoting the eating of healthy food, conscientiously grown — that is truly "well fare"?
William Pickard .
Falcon Farm,
Botton Village,
North Yorks YO21 2NJ.

THERE can be no doubt that farmers should be compensated for the devastating losses caused by BSE. On the other hand, I do not see why the burden should be carried entirely by the taxpayer.

Should the independent enquiry under Lord Justice Phillips reveal that, for example, the animal feed industry bears a responsibility for the outbreak of BSE, then clearly that industry should contribute towards compensating the farmers.
A Danielian.
19 Brambling Road,
Horsham,
West Sussex RH13 6AX.

We do not publish letters where only an e-mail address is supplied; please include a full postal address. We may edit letters: shorter ones are more likely to appear. We regret we cannot acknowledge those not used.

Double take

YOU might like to know that the Freddie Frinton sketch, Same Procedure As Last Year, is not only shown every year in the Scandinavian countries but also, under the title, Dinner For One, in Germany (Same laughs as last year on Scandinavian TV, December 24).

Each New Year's Eve since 1963, regional channels have broadcast this sketch in English and black and white, with a schoolmasterly announcer providing a brief German summary beforehand.

I am sure there would be similar protests as in Scandinavia if this long-running tradition were stopped. So when will the sketch be shown to an English audience?
Sigrid Werner.
42 Cromwell Road,
Beckenham,
Kent BR3 4LW.

ANYONE with a satellite dish can see what the Scandinavians and Germans are laughing at.

At least six of the German regional television stations which transmit across Europe on the satellites which also carry Sky are showing the aged May Warden/Freddie Frinton film — from MDR at 6pm British time on channel 43 through to Hesse TV on channel 40 at 2am.

Almost as good as old recordings of Clive James.
Alan Burkitt-Gray.
7 Foxes Dale,
London SE3 9BD.

A COUPLE of German students who stayed with us a few years ago asked if there was really such a thing as mulligatawny soup as it is mentioned in the sketch and they assumed that it was some weird English joke.

They were quite surprised when we served it to them for lunch.
Bill Johnson.
58 Culcheth Hall Drive,
Culcheth,
Warrington.

On an uncharitable quango

YOUR report (Scargill 'mismanaged' mine funds, December 23) on the proposal of the Charity Commission to remove Arthur Scargill as a trustee of two miners' welfare charities makes disturbing reading.

The Charity Commission is acting as both its own judge and jury. It is an unaccountable, unelected quango, which possesses enormous powers. It consistently follows a conservative political agenda, whether in relation to the NUM or indeed any charity that it deems "political".

We are a non-profit making, campaigning organisation which, three years ago, formed a charity. Unsubstantiated allegations made by certain trustees of the charity led the Charity Commission to obtain a High Court order freezing our funds earlier this year.

After vigorous representation and the threat of legal action, the order was withdrawn after three months by the Commission. We never received any explanation, still less an apology for their actions, the results of which were extremely costly. Nor were we given any notice of the application to the High Court.

It is long overdue, at a time when other quangos are being made accountable, that the affairs and management of the Charity Commission were opened for inspection.
Tony Greenstein.
Secretary,
Unemployed Centre Ltd,
PO Box 2536,
Rottingdean,
East Sussex BN2 6LX.

A Country Diary

MACHYNLLETH: Is the worst of winter still to come? Probably. But don't let that stop you from looking for signs of spring. And where better than in the garden? Here in the shelter of a witch hazel dressed over all in yellow, we find a patch of snowdrops with leaves an inch high. The first hellebores are beginning to bloom, wintersweet is fragrant on the air and there are wide-open flowers on Camellia "Cornish Snow". Outside the garden there is no such floral splendour except the yellow of the gorse. But other signals of spring are obvious enough in the bravely expanding leaves of hedge parsley, hemlock, water dropwort, herb bennet, wall pennywort and many others. And in the flocks of sheldducks newly arrived on the estuary.

We may be in for a freezing January like those of 1963 and 1982. In February we may get buried in snow as we were in 1947. But even the worst winters come to an end and though they leave the world looking pretty miserable, we all know how quickly most native plants revive even if garden tenderlings go under. Every winter is different but we can be fairly confident that February will expand the hazel catkins if January hasn't done it already; that March will open the wild daffodils and bring ring ouzels to the hills and chiffchaffs to the valleys; and that in April we will see the woods full of anemones, celandines, willow warblers and pied flycatchers — the miracles of every spring. We may take them all for granted but they are miracles all the same. So let winter rage its worst and let the first wheatears be singing on the tops of great snow drifts. Even so spring must come. So let me wish you a Happy New Year or, in the language of heaven (as Welsh is of course): *Blwyddyn Newydd Dda.*

WILLIAM CONDRY

The year of The People's power failure

Mark Lawson

YEARS which include elections are commonly supposed to be good for The People. But, even so, the rhetoric of populism unexpectedly dominated 1997. Princesses, palaces, governments and other institutions were all loudly declared to be The People's. Never before can that democratic apostrophe have appeared so often in the texts of speeches and in newspaper reports.

But was this merely a briefly fashionable piece of language or did a significant transfer of power occur during the year? This column has carried out a People's Audit.

In the areas in which The People have their main relationships with those above them — government and monarchy — this was a year in which the language of accountability and responsiveness reached record levels.

In his early months of power after his landslide victory in May, Tony Blair came to be regarded by his detractors as the ultimate populist. Rewriting the Labour manifesto to suit the views of focus groups, he seemed to be constructing a deliberately inoffensive administration which would simply incorporate into law (and, in particular, tax law) the consensus electorate position.

The Prime Minister's impeccable performance as national tear-leader in the week of the Princess of Wales' death — the time when, in naming her The People's Princess, he launched the age's most popular rhetorical conceit — seemed to establish him as The People's Prime Minister, a leader-as-follower, shamelessly playing the political percentage game.

It has, though, recently become clear that this was a parody of Blair's tactics. A sudden rush of contentious moves — the continuation of cigarette sponsorship, the ban on beef joints, the defence of unpopular colleagues like Irvine and Robinson, the savings account reforms — have established that he is able and willing to be as much of an unpopularist as any of his predecessors. Blair's critics must accept that the alleged chameleon has been revealed to have a leopard streak. He is not in any revolutionary sense The People's Prime Minister.

And what of the Royal Family — on whom Blair imposed the posthumous concept of The People's Princess? As students of the law know, British criminal cases are billed *Regina versus*, while American ones are labelled *The People versus*. In British culture, the main case of the year has been *Regina versus The People*.

Optimists (especially republican ones) have presented this as the year in which subjects became citizens and the monarchy was forced to reform. Certainly, it is true that, during the Diana week, the Queen was compelled to perform a London walkabout and a national TV broadcast which she would not otherwise have made. The Prince of Wales would also probably not have met the Spice Girls in public had a sense of crisis not prevailed.

And yet — in exchange for what are so far merely tiny concessions of presentation — Britain seems at the end of this allegedly revolutionary period to be a more solidly monarchistic place than at any time since the Jubilee 20 years ago.

Such was the anger of the Dianarites in September against the Royal Family that many were tempted to conclude that the crowds were implicitly republican. In fact — as soaring poll ratings for her recently-despised husband suggest — they were monarchists who now seem determined to preserve the throne for their heroine's son as a sentimental legacy. The People's Princess she may have been, but the most likely effect of her death seems at the moment to be the maintenance of an anti-populist constitution.

In the arts — from where we take most of our models of populism and audience-responsiveness — 1997 saw intriguing complications in the matter of taste. The long-held cynical view that the audience could be forced to like something — through blanket advertising and brazen declaration that this was the best — was unprecedentedly questioned by the fact that the majority of the most successful books and films this year were quietly released works which became famous through a chain of acclaim spreading from critics to consumers or simply through consumers.

THE most popular books in Britain by new authors — Bridget Jones's Diary by Helen Fielding and Paul Wilson's Little Book Of Calm — achieved their success not through adulatory campaigns but old-fashioned word of mouth. Unusually, the Booker Prize was won by a book which was already an established international bestseller: Arundhati Roy's The God Of Small Things.

Similarly, in cinema, the big Hollywood studios — where cynical calculation of mass expectation had long been the business plan — experienced a notably poor year in terms of both Oscar nominations and Multiplex hits. The groaning sideboards and ringing tills went to such surprise successes as The English Patient, Shine and The Full Monty which refreshingly met a public demand which had not been identified by market research and then ruthlessly targeted.

The biggest-selling record of the year — and indeed of history — was perhaps the first modern hit created entirely by public will, with no need for marketing beyond its presence in the shops: Elton John's Candle In The Wind (97).

So it can be said with some confidence that the arts are an area in which it has been The People's Year. Populism was imposed from below, not above. Two arts business stories were perhaps symbolic in this context. That great taste-anticipator, Andrew Lloyd-Webber, announced a significant drop in profits for his operating company. And the Royal Opera House — historically protected from box office logic by subsidy — experienced a financial crisis.

It was also appropriate that newspapers — the one area of culture to boast an organisation called simply The People — should also be heavily affected by this year's expressions of civilian will. It is hard to imagine more vivid illustrations of commercial response to popular opinion than the fact that 1997 ends with the Sun as a Labour-supporting paper and the proprietor of the Daily Mail, Viscount Rothermere, as a Labour peer. It really does seem to have been the year of The People's journalism.

And yet the unitiated outsider traditionally invoked on these occasions — the Martian or jungle-explorer — would surely be surprised, arriving on these shores in Christmas week, at the idea that 1997 had seen Britain's populist rethink.

After eating a meal which was prevented by government diktat from comprising beef on the bone, the population sat down to watch a televised address by their non-elected Head of State which — apart from a couple of time-specific factual references and a single unfamiliar camera angle — might have been delivered at any time in the last 30 years. At the same time, the heir to the throne is shown by opinion polls to have approval ratings of 51 per cent.

Does this restoration of the Prince of Wales really result from the creation of a new populist model moulded by the pressure of his subjects? A far more plausible reading is that what is revealed here is the deep desire of many of the public to have some authority (ideally royal) to defer to. This period of fabled egalitarianism looks, at its end, suspiciously like the usual annus horribilis for true democracy.

There's no fighting in Bosnia but it's a pretty lousy peace

Commentary

Martin Woollacott

WHEN politicians use archaic words, it is usually a sign they want to blur the issue. "You have seen what the war has *wrought*," President Clinton told an audience in Sarajevo on his trip there earlier this week. In 20th-century English he would have better said: "You have seen what the war has *done*", but that would not have served the purpose of mystification, the presentation of the conflict as a regressive medieval phenomenon with which a modern state like America could have no connection except as a saviour bringing help and the means of reconstruction.

By that word, it might be not too fancifully argued, President Clinton distanced himself and the United States from the war and its causes. Indeed, everything he said during his visit proposed the United States as part of the solution, with never a hint that it has been from the beginning a part of the problem and remains so today. It is not only that Yugoslavia was for many years a country economically sustained and politically indulged by the United States as much as it was by Western Europe, a fact which, among other things, partly insulated its government from the economic failures that undermined other eastern bloc regimes. That helped its Communist leaders to avoid the fate of their counterparts elsewhere as the bloc fell apart, and to transform themselves into nationalists. Nor only that the United States, fixated on the problem of Soviet breakdown, failed to see what was happening in Yugoslavia until too late, and then, under President Bush, took a fatalist line. It is that Clinton himself, over the more than five years since he first began campaigning against Bush's policy, influenced the course of the war. People died as he dithered, and because he dithered. That European leaders were also at fault does not much lessen his responsibility.

The American leader drove in a rather triumphal manner down the main Sarajevo boulevard, a trip which for most of that time was impossible. Instead, Sarajevans had to sneak along a parallel back road, imperfectly shielded from mortar and sniper fire by shattered high-rise buildings and, at intersections, by burnt-out trams and old containers. The president acted as if the way it is now is an American achievement, which to some extent it is. Did he also at least privately reflect that the way it was *then* was also a result of US action, or lack of it?

Clinton was urging military action in the summer of 1992, but when he became president, as Mark Danner makes clear in a recent long and cogent analysis in the New York Review of Books, Clinton could not summon the will or the nerve to intervene in the way he had so strongly implied he would. Thereafter what Clinton and his administration did served largely to fan the war flames. When the rhetoric leaned toward intervention, that encouraged the Bosnians to fight on, in the hope that the United States was finally going to come in and rescue them in some way. When the rhetoric went unsupported by action, that encouraged the Serbs, who came to more and more discount the possibility of an American military intervention.

And, whatever Clinton implies, that action never came. What came instead was action by proxy, following a long period of building up the Croatian armed forces, and, to a much lesser extent, the Bosnian forces. The overstretched Bosnian Serbs finally met their Waterloo in the Krajina. The foundation of the Dayton Agreement was the Croatian military victory in the Krajina, with the accompanying mass flight of Krajina Serbs. The Serbs signed it because they knew that a Croatian and Bosnian roll-back could strip them of the whole of the western part of the Bosnian Serb territories — and empty those territories of their Serbian inhabitants, producing a surge of refugees which would undermine not only the Pale regime but also that in Belgrade. European soldiers, particularly after General Rupert Smith contrived some effective policies, made a contribution to this overall tipping of the military balance against the Serbs, and American air power had some effect. But it was not the peace keeping or peace "enforcing" troops or the American planes which ended the fighting. It was the Serbs, because they feared more Croat and Bosnian victories, and that the situation could only get worse for them. The United States then contrived a "peace" by leaning on the Croatians and above all on the Bosnians to sign an agreement. The Serbs were saved, the Croatians were more or less satisfied, but some Bosnians, particularly elements within the ruling party, have the ambition and perhaps the means to go to war for more territory. That, along with fears over Kossovo, is the main negative reason why Nato troops have to stay, and the main reason for European sighs of relief at Clinton's recent decision to indefinitely extend the deadline for the departure of American troops.

> It was not the peace-keeping troops or the American planes which ended the fighting. It was the Serbs

The imperfections of Dayton are well known, and were reviewed this month, two years after the accords came into force. There has been no major fighting and there has been something of an economic revival in the Muslim-Croat federation territories, while in the Serbian entity, the West has interfered in local politics with some small success. On the other hand, the country is emphatically still partitioned. Those parts of Dayton that would work to give Bosnia some of the aspects of a single state are precisely the parts that have been most resisted, and not only by the Bosnian Serbs. But the compiling of lists of "achievements" on the one hand, and "failures" on the other misses the point, particularly since many of today's achievements could become tomorrow's means of resuming the war. The point, as Jane Sharp, of the Centre for Defence Studies at King's College, says in a recent paper, is that "the tendency to appease rather than to punish the aggression" still drives Western policy in Bosnia.

In other words, America and Europe still base their policy on accommodating to the strength of the local actors. The West at first tried to accommodate and use Slobodan Milosevic, with scant results. Then the Americans and Germans switched to Franjo Tudjman, with more effective results, but, even so, it was not Western strength proper on the scales but his — that of an authoritarian, ultranationalist leader among whose barely concealed aims were the ethnic cleansing of Serbs from his country and at least the informal incorporation of parts of Bosnia. In spite of the thousands of troops and the millions of pounds of aid that Western countries have provided, it remains the case that the West still shields itself from cost and confrontation by working with rather than, on occasion, *against* the lines of strength in the Balkans. That is one reason why Tudjman and Milosevic still survive, the one strong, the other weakened but still apparently immoveable. It is also one reason why the Serbian people live in a realm of fantasy in which they, not others, are the victims, and in which, in their elections, they "choose" between equally extreme and repellent politicians. If Clinton's decision to extend the service of American troops means only that we go on as before in the south Slav lands, little will have been gained, even if certain dangers may be avoided. That in truth is what America, along with its European allies, has wrought in Bosnia.

Goths are at the gate of Emperor Clinton

One of the USA's most acerbic authors **Lewis Lapham**, looks at American society with distaste and foreboding, and sees parallels with great, fallen empires which sowed the seeds of their destruction

What are we waiting for,
assembled in the forum?
The barbarians are due here
today.

CP Cavafy (1898)

ON THE night of August 10, 410, when King Alaric's 100,000 Visigoths drove their bronze-headed battering rams through the walls of Rome, the Emperor Honorius was in his palace on the Adriatic coast, arranging and rearranging his collection of prize poultry.

Later the next day, while the Goths were busy looting the imperial city and murdering its inhabitants, a court chamberlain in Ravenna informed the emperor that Rome had perished. Honorius received the news with shock and disbelief. "Rome perished?" he said. "It is not an hour since she was feeding out of my hand."

The chamberlain explained that he referred to the city of Rome, not to the emperor's chicken of the same name. The clarification relieved the emperor of his anxiety. "But I thought, my friend," he said, "that you meant that I had lost my *bird*, Rome."

Not all the stories end with so absurd a moral, but over the past 16 centuries the fall of empires and the ruin of nation-states invariably have been preceded by a comparable lack of attention on the part of the authorities nominally sovereign.

A succession of Catholic popes in the late Renaissance preferred the adoration of their mistresses to the contemplation of the saints, and the rapacity of their political ambitions so degraded the image of the church that it was sapped of the strength to excommunicate the Protestant Reformation.

The ruling aristocracy in late 18th-century England couldn't conceive the possibility of losing a war with the American colonies. Enthralled by the dream of omnipotence, the ministers and peers responsible for the management of American affairs didn't think it worth their trouble to cross the Atlantic to see what it was they were talking about. Edmund Burke attributed their foolishness to "plentiful fortunes, assured rank and quiet homes".

AMONG the myriad indices of the general loss of faith in government, probably the most vivid is the figure of the president. The voters in November 1996 knew that Clinton was caught in the nets of at least three examinations of his sexual and financial conduct, all of which he was likely to fail, but they also knew that he was a man so lacking in character that he couldn't ask any questions — at least not with a straight face — that might require his fellow citizens to correct their own weaknesses or temper their own appetites for self-love.

His presence in the White House confirms the capitalist presumption — dear to the hearts of the people who paid for his election — that politics doesn't count for much in a world geared to the interests of the transnational economic order. If Clinton can be president, then clearly the office isn't worth the having.

Like almost everybody else who follows the story of American politics, my information is anecdotal and I have no idea how opulent plutocracies will manage their passage into the next century. I read in the paper that the country spends $2 billion a year on the purchase of golf equipment (just the clubs and balls, not the shirts, the hats and the shoes), and I know that I live in a society rich beyond the Emperor Nero's dreams of avarice.

But then, in the same paper, I come across the news that 21 million American families subsist on annual incomes of less than $25,000 (scarcely enough to pay a year's caddie fees at Pebble Beach), and I remember what happens to societies that allow the opening of too broad a gulf between cities of the rich and poor.

That gulf is now greater than at any time since the heyday of Imperial Rome, but the oligarchy that presides over the administration of what was once the American republic finds no cause for alarm. On the contrary.

Instead of attempting a more equitable division of the nation's wealth, the oligarchy seeks its greater concentration in monopolies always more narrowly held and implacably defended.

In June of this year both houses of Congress passed budget bills awarding 65 per cent of a projected tax reduction to the richest 20 per cent of the citizenry, while providing only 13 per cent of the benefits to the poorest 60 per cent.

> American political classes, being themselves complicit in the well-financed banditry at large in the world, paper over their superfluousness with gossip about Hillary Clinton's astrologer and the sins of children's television

The numbers square with the attitudes of entrenched selfishness that have dictated government policy for the past 10 or 20 years — the bias expressed as legislation that favours the merger of large corporations into even larger corporations (ABC with Disney, Boeing with McDonnell Douglas, Morgan Stanley with Dean Witter), curtails or eliminates the funds available to public education, encourages the systematic exploitation of the poor (most savagely by the health maintenance organisations and the insurance companies), deregulates the banking system, denies the possibility of complaint or redress on the part of common folk robbed by their feudal overlords.

A bill passed in June 1995 allows corporate officials (mutual funds salesmen, company presidents) to defend themselves against charges of fraud merely by saying that they genuinely forgot to disclose matters of pertinent fact — either because they were distracted at the time by more urgent concerns (a difficult bunker shot, something wrong in the engine of the Lexus) or because the thought of disclosure never crossed their minds.

As might be expected, the shining face of the global economy wears its brightest smile in the show windows of the media owned and operated by the same oligarchy that owns and operates the banks. The accompanying press releases predict limitless good news in a world joyfully blessed by open markets, convertible currencies and free trade.

The financial magazines make no attempt to quiet their emotions or restrain the breathless tenor of their prose. Behold, men of genius and resolve — Billionaires! Visionaries! Entrepreneurs! — trading cable systems for telephone lines, and telephone lines for movie studios, and movie studios for cable systems, buying and selling the wells of celebrity that water the gardens of paradise.

I don't doubt that the comforts of the global economy are many and wonderful to behold. But they come at a cost that can be expressed in other sets of always larger numbers — the ones about the destruction of the forests and the fish, about the fast-rising slums that engulf the cities of steel and glass, about the dissolution of the ozone layer and the proliferation of sewer rats and nuclear weapons.

The rule of law meanwhile loses its hold on the ferocious élites (corporate and predatory, often criminal) that with the force and arrogance of capitalism intimidate the world's parliaments (in China and Mexico, in Russia and Brazil as well as in the United States) in a manner not unlike that of the military commanders in the 1st century BC who bullied the Roman Senate with the force of arms. Our American political classes in the meantime, being themselves complicit in the well-financed banditry at large in the world, paper over their superfluousness with gossip about Hillary Clinton's astrologer and the sins of children's television...

Their insouciance unnerves me because I would have thought that the barbarism implicit in the restless energies of big-time, global capitalism requires some sort of check or balance, if not by a spiritual doctrine or impulse, then by a lively interest in (or practice of) democratic government.

The collapse of Communism at the end of the cold war removed from the world's political theatre the last pretence of a principled opposition to the rule of money, and the pages of history suggest that oligarchy unhindered by conscience or common sense seldom takes much of an interest in the cause of civil liberty.

THE GUESTS taking their turns at the waltz in the ballrooms of the *belle epoque* wouldn't have known where to look on a map for the names of the towns on the Western Front — Passchendaele, Ypres, Cambral, Chateau-Thierry, Verdun — soon to become synonymous with the end of what was once a world.

Nearly 100 years later I can no more guess at the sequence of events lying below the horizon of a new century than could the Duke of Devonshire or the Czar of All the Russias, but I think it probable that the United States will find it increasingly difficult as well as irritating and unnecessary to sustain the risks of freedom.

The trend of the times favours the rule of force (more laws restricting the liberty of persons, fewer laws restraining the rights of property), and the focus of the hope for a brighter future or a better life shifts from the politics of here and now to the lotteries of there and then.

If our legislators no longer write their own laws, or our merchant princes their own press releases and our university presidents their own commencement speeches, then who rises to the defence of liberty? An oligarchy that reads from rented scripts already has put itself up for sale.

The transfers of title to the new owners of state don't always entail the massacre of the former occupants. Sometimes the barbarians amuse themselves by trying on the costumes of civilisation; a good deal of real estate changes hands, but after a few years the department stores re-open, a new gallery of faces makes itself known to the gossip columnists on duty in the best restaurants and the better hotels, and nobody who is still somebody can remember when or why it was that they didn't think tyranny was exciting and glamorous and fun.

THIS WEEK'S essayist, Lewis Lapham, is editor of Harper's Magazine in New York. His previous books include Money And Class in America and Hotel America. This essay is extracted from Waiting For The Barbarians, published in London by Verso on January 6

SOMETIMES IT'S EASIER TO TALK TO SOMEONE YOU DON'T LIKE.

A REGISTERED CHARITY. PHOTOGRAPHY BY EDWARD SYKES

When you have a problem, it's the most natural thing in the world to want to talk it through with someone. But who?

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The Samaritans

Twin boost for battered economy from goverment and world banks

IMF's loan plans calm Korean crisis

Laurie Laird

HAPPY days returned to South Korea's financial markets yesterday — at least temporarily — as the new government laid plans to boost the beleaguered economy.

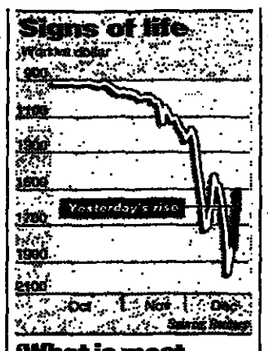
Investors were also cheered by aggressive action from western nations to prop up Korea and the thought that the industrialised world could go to great lengths to prevent the world's eleventh largest economy from falling.

Meanwhile, the Bank of England, after agreeing on Christmas Eve to contribute an immediate £240 million to a rescue package, yesterday asked British banks to extend their loans to South Korean institutions. As it stands, Korean banks must repay foreign currency loans totalling $25 billion (£15 billion) over the next month. If creditor nations refuse to extend, or "roll over" those loans, many banks face bankruptcy.

Several UK banks are thought to have significant exposure to Korean debt. Earlier this week Abbey National admitted to holding Korean bonds, but said the amount of Korean debt on its books is "small".

The Bank of England's move follows a similar plea from Bank of Japan, as Japanese banks hold more than a quarter of Korea's foreign currency debt. The head of the French bankers' association said yesterday that French banks are also likely to extend existing loans to Korea.

In another meeting, the International Monetary Fund and the Group of Seven industrialised nations agreed to speed up agreed financial assistance to Korea. The IMF will send $2 billion to Korea by early next week, while the G7 will send another $8 billion next month. Those funds should allow Korea to cover foreign exchange debts due over the next two months.



'What is most important now is to restore international confidence in our economy, bring in dollars and create jobs. If this cannot be done, our economy has no hope'

Kim Dae-jung, Korean president-elect

Korea's financial markets reacted smartly to the news of overseas assistance. The won jumped 23 per cent — its biggest one-day gain — ending at just under 1,500 to the US dollar, while Korea's main share index rose nearly 7 per cent to finish at 375.15.

But international aid is not coming easily; Korea's new government has pledged far-reaching reform to qualify for the western aid package — changes likely to shake the foundations of the post-war Korean economic structure.

President-elect Kim Dae-jung says he will sanction the widespread reduction of bank workers — unheard of in modern Korea. Under existing law, solvent companies are all but banned from laying off employees.

More profitable banks will be more attractive to overseas institutions, and Korea yesterday indicated it will allow foreign banks to take majority stakes in Korean ones. Until this year foreign ownership of equity shares was restricted to below 20 per cent of any one issue.

State television yesterday reported the government is seeking foreigners to take over two of the nation's most troubled banks, Korea First Bank and SeoulBank, by February. The network also reported that America's Citibank and Chase Manhattan, along with an arm of HSBC may be interested in an acquisition, although Citibank has denied such reports.

The government yesterday scuppered plans to nationalise Kia Motors, Korea's eighth-largest conglomerate, which collapsed in July, leaving some $10 billion in debt. The new regime says it will attempt to hawk the carmaker to either a foreign or domestic company.

In other Asian markets, Japan's Nikkei 225 index fell 3 per cent yesterday, slumping to 14,802 — its second lowest close of the year. Rumours of another imminent Japanese bankruptcy spooked investors.

The Tomen Corporation — a medium-sized trading house — is the latest anxiety, despite denials from the company's president. The fears follow the collapse of another Japanese company yesterday, the Nitto Life Company, a developer of golf courses.

The Dow Jones industrial average rose 19.19 points to 7679.31 on Wall Street last night.

Stamp act . . . Seoul students take it out on Japanese-made pens and pencils as investors cheer IMF boost for Korean markets PHOTOGRAPH: YONHAP

Saturday Notebook

Mergers with a positive spin

Alex Brummer

IT HAS been a year in which banking mergers and takeovers have been all the rage and, if the stock market is correct in pushing the value of financial shares to ever dizzier heights, 1998 will see more of the same. Mostly these mergers will be written about in terms of their commercial significance. Amid the pot-pourri of business justifications the human dimension of agglomeration can, and is, easily lost.

But financial combinations also impact on a far broader range of stakeholders. The merger of two Swiss banking giants, Swiss Bank Corporation and Union Bank of Switzerland, to create the new United Bank of Switzerland, will mean heavy job losses, with an estimated 11,000 vanishing in the City of London.

If, as has been widely expected, there were to be a merger between two of the UK's largest banks — Barclays and NatWest — then the SBC/UBS job losses would be just a taster for large-scale branch closures throughout the United Kingdom.

But it is not actually a requirement that the human impact of bank mergers, or for that matter demutualisation of the kind seen in 1997, has to be entirely negative.

One of the smaller building societies to convert to a bank in 1997 — the Northern Rock — deliberately set about maintaining some mutual traditions by retaining an element of charitable giving: a useful precedent in a UK corporate culture that encourages directors to look after their own interests through inflated salaries and stock options, rather than those of a broader public.

Big mergers do not have to be wholly negative. Arguably, Britain's most successful financial group in the 1990s has been Lloyds Bank, which now has a stock market valuation that challenges that of the global HSBC group (owners of Midland Bank in the UK and the Hongkong Bank in the Far East).

Through a series of well judged takeovers including the absorption of the Cheltenham & Gloucester building society; the minority interests in its insurance offshoot Lloyds Abbey Life and the absorption of TSB — to make Lloyds TSB — it has in many respects become the UK's flagship bank.

Not because of its flashy involvement in investment banking or even extravagant investment overseas (although that remains an interest particularly in Europe) but because of its strong focus on UK personal banking.

WHILE the business consequences (both good and bad) of the Lloyds TSB merger have been widely recognised, there has been little attention paid to the charitable aspects of this event. In December alone, as a result of decisions taken at the time of the 1995/96 merger between the two banks, some £462,000 has been distributed by the Lloyds TSB Foundation for England and Wales to 178 different causes.

This charitable giving, which is turning Lloyds TSB into the largest UK corporate giver other than the National Lottery provider Camelot, is deeply rooted in the history of the two companies. Lloyds Bank has been an active charitable giver since it was founded by the Quaker, Sampson Lloyd — although not on a scale which set it apart from other UK corporate givers. TSB was, however, a rather different case.

At the time of its floatation in 1986, there was considerable dispute about its ownership structure, which complicated the public offering. One way in which this was dealt with by the then Tory government was to constitute four TSB Foundations — covering England and Wales, Scotland, the Channel Islands and Northern Ireland.

The Foundations were to be both owners of unclaimed and disputed shares in the TSB as well as charitable givers: it was a neat way of disarming those who believed that the state was in some way depriving them of a birthright.

Preserving this structure, together with the Quaker traditions of Lloyds itself, thus became a key side issue at the time of the merger. While much of the financial reporting focused on the fate of the TSB's wasteful acquisition, the merchant bank Hill Samuel, the managements of the two banks were devising a new structure for voluntary giving.

THE NEW Lloyds TSB Foundations would be entitled to recieve 1 per cent of Lloyds TSB pre-tax profits averaged over three years, in lieu of dividend. The 1 per cent charitable giving figure has long been a goal for UK companies, as a result of the efforts of Hector Laing at United Biscuits in the 1980s. But the cause has never really caught on and certainly not in a financial institution which has proved such a consistent profit spinner as Lloyds TSB.

Before the merger, the voluntary giving of the two separate organisations in the period 1987 to 1996 was some £30 million, or just over £3 million a year. Now, however, that giving is set to make quantum leap.

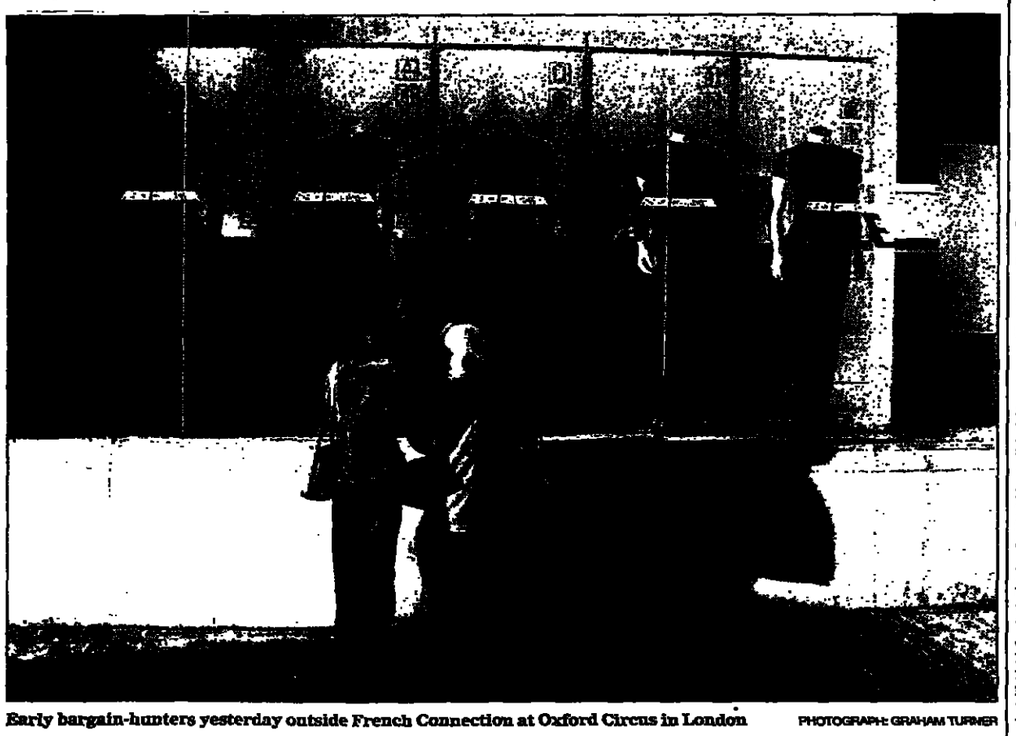
Providing Lloyds TSB profitability does not take a sudden dip (the reverse could be true were there to be more absorption of companies in the mutual sector) then by 1999 the bank could be responsible for distributing some £25 million annually. While this might seem modest in comparison with the huge annual expenditures of the great US family foundations: Ford, Rockefeller, Getty and Hughes it will, by UK standards, be an enormous force.

Moreover, in contrast to the National Lottery, which until recently was focused on grandiose projects, the Lloyds TSB Foundation is focusing its attention on the gaps in the charitable marketplace. The giving is largely small scale enabling some 3,300 separate local charities to benefit in 1997 — the first full year of operation.

What is most encouraging is that there is no debate inside Lloyds TSB about the wisdom of such a programme or its publicity benefit. This is not seen as simply a means of attracting cheap and favourable publicity.

The purpose is involvement, with bank staff encouraged to support the scheme by a commitment to matched giving. Welfare to work has become a mantra for Labour. But some corners of commerce, rooted in the same Judeo-Christian work ethic arrived there first: it would be great if others would follow.

High street relies on a spree after seasonal overstocking



Early bargain-hunters yesterday outside French Connection at Oxford Circus in London PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

Stores banking on sales

Paul Murphy

BRITAIN'S major high street stores groups are banking on a new year speeding spree to allieviate chronic overstocking problems and avoid a rash of poor trading statements and corporate profit warnings over the coming weeks.

As the traditional sales season got underway yesterday, several of the big chains and consumer groups reported an initial rush, with shoppers looking to pick up early bargains.

Sales began yesterday at B&Q, Comet and House of Fraser, while the discounting started before Christmas at Laura Ashley and Dolcis.

But customers were said to be shopping "tactically," continuing the trend which became clear on Monday and Tuesday this week, when stores reported "a last minute spree, but no splurge."

According to the Credit Card Research Group, Christmas shoppers have been using their debit cards, rather than running up their credit card bills. "Cardholders have not forgotten about Christmas this year but they are spending prudently with one eye on their January statement," said the group's economist, David Joy.

Figures released last week suggested that goods worth £3 billion or more would need to be shifted over the coming month — a 50 per cent rise over the January sales a year ago. The problems faced by retailers are especially acute since high-street spending had already been dealt a blow at the end of the summer after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Initial figures released by the Office for National Statistics showing consumer spending rising at 1.2 per cent in the three-months to end-September had to be revised down to just 0.7 per cent earlier this month.

During the run up to Christmas, clothing and footwear stores are said to have suffered the most, with the heaviest spending going on records, jewellery and computers. And on Tuesday, Knickerbox, the specialist underwear chain, was put into administration, threatening 200 jobs at 27 outlets.

The administrator, Simon Freakley of accountants Buchler Phillips, blamed "light" traffic on the high street, but he remained confident that a buyer would be found for the business.

Magnet hit by strike at 200 outlets

MAGNET, the kitchens and doors specialist, was hit by a strike at its 200 outlets across the country yesterday, with members of three unions threatening to picket the stores until the end of the January sale, *writes Paul Murphy.*

Ian Crammond, secretary of the Magnet Strike Committee, claimed workers had been unfairly sacked from the company's Darlington factory 16 months ago. Industrial action followed the redundancies and led to the formation of the committee.

He said Magnet had sacked 350 workers who went on strike, after proper ballots, to protest that almost half of their colleagues were not being offered a pay rise after a three-year pay freeze.

David Williams, chief executive of Magnet, said: "The company regrets any inconvenience to customers caused by the picketing, but despite sporadic action of this kind throughout 1997, sales have increased by 15 per cent this year."

He said the Darlington factory had a new workforce, which has succeeded in raising productivity levels.

People's car on way to being comeback Bug

The new Beetle, to launch in 1998, is more than just another update, says MARK TRAN

A FUTURISTIC version of the venerable Beetle will go on sale in the United States early next year as German car group Volkswagen revives the "people's car" first set in motion by the Nazi regime that went on to sell more than 21 million models around the world.

About 50,000 Beetle diehards have already ordered the new Beetle, although it will not be unveiled until the Detroit Motor Show on January 5. The American market will provide the first important test for the new Beetle, with production initially set at 100,000 units a year.

The new "Bug" will sell for between $15,000 and $18,000 (between £9,000 and £10,700), a relatively low price, and in keeping with its populist image.

Deliveries of right-hand drive models to the United Kingdom are not expected to begin until early 1999 — there are about 1 million Beetles on the road in the UK. The new Beetles will be made at Volkswagen's Mexican plants, which still produce the old Beetle.

The old Beetle is still popular in the US, judging from the numerous Beetle websites on the Internet. The subject of various Hollywood films, such as Herbie the Love Bug, is particularly well-liked in California, where the Beetle enjoys an environmentally friendly image.

The New Beetle has a more advanced engine but it will be clearly a descendant of the Beetle designed in 1934 by Ferdinand Porsche. Volkswagen says the model is not an update of the original but a completely new car, "a Beetle driving forward into the 21st century".

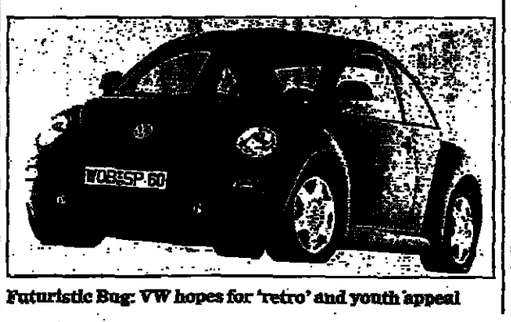
Unlike the old Bug, the new Beetle has an engine in the front, front-wheel drive and features such as a compact-disc stereo system and side airbags for front-seat occupants. Significantly larger than the old model, it is based on Volkswagen's new Golf chassis — Europe's number one-selling car.

"Some may have predicted a 'retro' car, but the New Beetle is a completely modern design, almost futuristic. It will appeal to those who fondly recall the past as well as young people who have no connection with the original," said Clive Warrilow, president and chief executive of Volkswagen America.

"Where the original Beetle provided basic transportation, the New Beetle is an upmarket, lifestyle vehicle," he added.

The Beetle owes its comeback to Concept 1, a show car designed by Volkswagen during the early 1990s. The response by those who saw it was universal: build it.

Volkswagen is again pushing the Beetle's universal, classless appeal, saying the new version is meant to be "egalitarian, cutting across all possible classes and demographics".



Futuristic Bug: VW hopes for 'retro' and youth appeal

Thin trading for wary investors

Paul Murphy

STOCKBROKERS are resigned to several days of thin and potentially volatile trading on the London market, with most big investors expected to hold off portfolio adjustments until the new year.

Many strategists remain wary that events in the Far East may yet spark a rush out of British and American equities and into the relative safety of the bond markets.

But others are convinced that recent takeover and merger activity, plus an expected increase in the number of corporate share buybacks, will protect the London market, where large investors are already flush with cash.

On Christmas Eve, during a truncated pre-holiday trading session, the FTSE 100 drifted 35.9 points lower to close at 5013.9. The FTSE Mid 250 index of second line companies eased 8.2 points to 4698.1.

Dealers reported a lack of investment business across all sectors, with investors and brokers choosing to withdraw their orders for shares in the biggest companies from the newly-introduced Sets trading system. This led to another rash of unnaturally wide spreads between buy and sell prices, accentuating the move on the Top 100 index.

Of the 200 million shares that changed hands on Wednesday morning, almost a fifth was accounted for by business in Sears after news that the group has disposed of the bulk of its footwear retailing business with the sale of Shoe City to Brantano of Belgium. Shares in Sears ended unchanged at 50½p.

Biocompatibles, one of the companies which suffered in the recent rout amongst biotechnology stocks, recovered 37½p to 465p. But worries about commodity prices sent Rio Tinto down 30½p to 705p, while Danka Business Systems, the photocopying group, shed 21p to 227½p after its recent profits warning.

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The City Column

Tipsters fetch up with mixed fortunes

Ian King

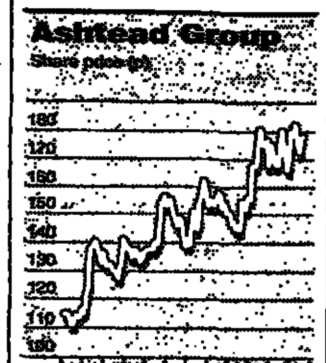
IN A year in which the FTSE 100 burst through the 5000 level, helped by rampant demand for a handful of drug, oil and banking stocks, many of Britain's highest paid fund managers have been badly caught out. Several have been in full "sackcloth and ashes" mode recently, as they mournfully explained how they had underestimated how well the market would perform in the event of a Labour victory in the general election and, more particularly, how City-friendly a Labour government would be.

By comparison, the tips offered by members of the Guardian's City team this time last year have had mixed fortunes, with four posting gains and just one finishing in negative territory. In what has been a choppy year in the markets, just one of our tips has outperformed the All-Share index.

So, how did our various tips perform?

Going abroad . . . Sir Chips Keswick (right) with Société Générale chief Philippe Citerne at the sale of Hambros to the French group PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAEL CRABTREE

Ian King



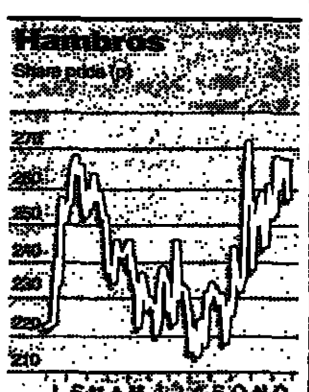
AT THE start of the year, Ashtead was a small plant hire rental company, valued at £300 million. During 1997, the company has, as we forecast, broken into the FTSE Mid-250, and is now valued at more than £500 million.

Ashtead chairman Peter Lewis said he expected the group to double in size over the next few years and it snapped up rival Sheriff in August, in a £39.4 million all-share deal, putting it second in the sector.

Since then, the company has continued to look attractive to fund managers, as the building and building materials sectors consolidate and, this time next year, Ashtead could be market leader.

All the analysts following Ashtead have buy or hold recommendations on the stock. At 177½p, the shares trade at a multiple of 19 times future expected earnings. That may look pricy, but for a company with management of proven quality, not unreasonable. Keep buying.

Patrick Donovan



WHEN our former City editor, Patrick Donovan, tipped Hambros last year, he did so on the expectation that a break-up bidder would emerge for the blue-chip merchant bank during 1997. What no-one could have forecast was that Hambros would break itself up.

The rot had set in in 1996, when predatory fund Regent Pacific took a hostile stake in Hambros and crossed swords with patriarchal chairman Sir Chips Keswick.

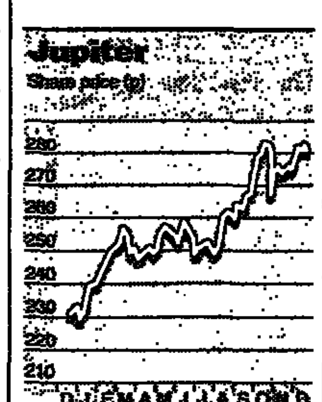
Then the bank's corporate finance department advised Andrew Regan's foolhardy attempt to bid for the Co-operative Wholesale Society. Three corporate financiers resigned and Sir Chips made a humiliating apology to the Co-op.

Hambros called in Schroders to advise on how it could turn things around and the last few weeks have seen a flurry of activity, with Belgium's Générale de Banque snapping up Hambros's small and medium lending activities.

Last week, French group Société Générale confirmed that it was buying the other main operations which had traded under the Hambros Bank name. Some mystery remains about other businesses, including Hambros Countrywide and Hambros Insurance services.

Donovan, now a public relations adviser with financial advisers Citigate, said: "Hambros always looked like a red-hot bid target and it is no surprise this has happened. There was always value to be realised and it is to be regretted that the rich pickings only became available to shareholders so late in the year."

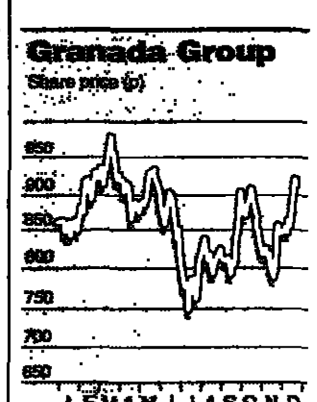
Richard Miles



RICHARD Miles, who left the Guardian during the year, came in at second place with the Jupiter Income Fund. The unit trust, which saw its funds under management rocket to over £1 billion during the year, enjoyed a 17 per cent improvement.

"Jupiter Income had a very good performance during 1996, which carried on into 1997, even though the size of the fund has grown remarkably. It continues a fairly safe bet," said Mr Miles.

Dominic Walsh



One of the high-fliers of 1996, helped by its blockbuster acquisition of Forte that year, Granada has had a rather low-key 1997 by comparison. The hotels, rentals, motorway services and media group has spent much of the year bedding down the Forte businesses, selling off under-performing assets, although the management team of Gerry Robinson and Charles Allen still had enough time to snap up rival ITV operator Yorkshire Tyne-Tees.

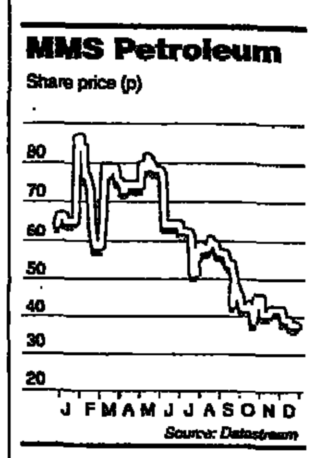
However, dogged by fears that Messrs Robinson and Allen have over-reached themselves, Granada's shares have not been a sparkling success this year and have underperformed the market by some way.

But Dominic Walsh, who has joined the Times since tipping Granada shares last year, remains unrepentant about his choice.

He admitted: "I don't think I've helped the shares by some of the things I've written this year. Doubts over Granada's hotels strategy emerged early in the year, while advertising revenues from the ITV businesses also came under pressure — that double-edged sword rather cut me down and the Gerry 'n' Charles show didn't quite roll on as hoped.

"That said, I still think Granada are reasonably well-set for the future, and their last set of results proved most of the detractors wrong. Although there may be doubts over whether the management is committed in the long term to brands like the Meridien hotel chain, the company is still going in the right direction."

Paul Murphy



THE only turkey in our Christmas selection last year, MMS Petroleum — a stock loved by rogue fund-manager Peter Young — lost 40 per cent of its value in 1997, despite enjoying a spectacular run of some weeks after being tipped in these pages.

Stock market correspondent Paul Murphy argued last year that the Irish-registered oil and gas exploration company's shares were only in the doldrums because of the Peter Young affair. He pointed out both the quality of its management and the hopes for MMS' exploration prospects, many of which are in eastern Europe.

Since then, there has been little to report, and with most eyes in the oil sector concentrated on the big boys, the company's shares have failed to make headway.

Despite this, Murphy remains unabashed, although he admits the shares have been "severely disappointing".

He added: "The reason MMS hasn't performed is that the management, a conservative lot who used to work at Ultramar, have failed to do any sort of deal. Nothing's happened with the company — its prospects are still in the ground; there's been no production at all yet. The company have tried other deals but failed. They ran into problems with one possible deal, so there's still loads of cash in the balance sheet, worth around 40p a share — it's like buying cheap money.

"Morgan Grenfell still have their stake, but in the meantime, MMS is suffering from a lack of interest."

So, there you have it — this is how last year's share tips from the Guardian's City team fared. Read this page next week to find out our selections for 1998.

UNIT TRUST PRICES

Abbey

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
American Gth	516.70	544.60	3.90	0.31
Accut & Earn	334.70	358.00	0.30	2.85
Asian Pac	210.90	225.80	0.40	0.58
Capital Res	153.90	154.00	-	4.54
Div & Growth	80.81	85.76	-0.05	4.07
European Acc	237.90	254.40	3.10	0.78
Ethical	89.06	94.74	-0.26	1.93
Extra Income Tst	42.54	45.04	0.01	8.24
General	310.30	330.10	-0.30	2.97
Gilt & Fixed	143.10	151.80	-	5.88
High Inc	217.80	232.90	-0.10	4.33
Japan	68.90	73.70	0.20	-
Latin America Tst	76.30	81.27	1.00	0.82
Mngd Income Tst	51.47	54.75	0.04	4.11
Master Tst	179.80	192.30	0.20	1.15
US Emerging	210.80	225.50	2.50	-
Worldwide	271.70	288.20	1.30	3.48

Abtrust

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Amer & Growth	74.87	77.83	-1.05	-
European	163.62	170.38	-0.59	-
Extra Inc	57.52	60.55	-0.06	4.84
Pacific	52.54	55.18	-0.21	0.22

Allchurches

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Amity Acc	137.05	145.41	0.27	1.76
Amity Inc	108.45	112.84	0.22	1.76

AXA Equity & Law

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Balanced	71.55	76.11	0.09	2.42
Br Excell	113.80	121.10	-	2.30
Br Funds Acc	143.60	152.70	-0.40	4.55
Br Funds Inc	92.12	98.00	-0.25	4.55
Europe	457.80	485.50	5.20	0.61
General Acc	827.50	880.30	-0.30	2.58
General Inc	674.40	717.40	-0.20	2.58
Global Opps	106.80	113.60	1.00	0.31
Gilts & Fix Acc	233.20	248.30	0.30	5.59
Gilt/Fix Int Inc	97.12	102.60	0.10	6.59
Higher Acc	1053.00	1120.00	-1.00	4.87
Higher Inc	540.70	575.20	-0.60	4.87
Japan Trust	31.66	33.70	-0.26	-
N America	404.20	429.80	5.00	-
Pacific Basin	273.50	290.90	4.40	2.50
UK Gth Acc	571.70	608.10	-0.20	2.55
UK Gth Inc	361.30	384.30	-0.20	2.55

Baillie Gifford

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
America	436.80	464.50	1.70	-
BG Bond	124.50	130.95	-	6.43
BG C & Gen	68.45	72.82	-0.08	5.44
BG Europe	358.00	380.50	1.90	-
BG Income	408.60	432.60	-0.30	4.60
Intl Ex	1024.00	1088.00	-	0.71
Japan	263.50	279.20	0.90	-
Japan Fund	423.00	437.00	1.20	-
UK Smlr Co s	67.39	68.37	-0.04	1.59

Barclays

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
America	225.10	238.90	-4.60	0.04
Aust Acc	189.60	202.80	-2.90	1.07
Aust Inc	112.30	119.40	-1.70	1.07
500	516.30	554.10	-0.50	2.13
Capital	178.70	190.10	-1.90	1.67
Extra Income	167.60	178.80	-0.40	4.34
Euro Gth A	216.50	229.49	-1.30	0.72
Euro Gth I	233.40	246.88	-1.10	0.72
Exempt Tst	103.60	110.20	-0.20	2.26
Gilt & Fixed	62.21	65.45	0.10	7.01
Financial	126.00	135.90	-0.40	1.83
Growth Acc	557.00	592.80	-1.10	1.54
General	399.00	424.50	1.90	1.76
Intl Income	83.09	88.94	-1.63	1.43
Invest Acc	1124.00	1196.00	1.00	1.75
Invest Inc	519.50	552.80	0.60	1.75
Income Tst	697.10	743.60	1.40	4.05
Japan Acc	89.19	95.19	0.48	-
Japan Inc	87.16	92.73	0.48	-
Smaller Cos	72.90	77.95	-0.40	2.41
Special Sits	508.40	540.90	0.40	1.82
Trustee Fund	277.70	295.40	0.20	1.72
Worldwide	206.80	219.50	-0.60	0.80

Baring

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Euro Gth	415.80	444.60	0.40	0.80
American Gth	173.70	183.50	-3.60	-
Eastern	167.30	174.10	-2.20	0.50
Europe	470.50	500.70	-2.10	0.80
Japan Gth	127.77	135.50	-0.30	-
Japan Fun	74.66	79.38	-0.77	-
Pref Inc	171.30	182.60	-0.40	2.00
Port Acc	330.60	352.50	-0.70	2.00
UK Small Co s	121.70	130.00	0.10	1.00

Britannia Life

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Balanced Gth	178.45	189.92	0.38	1.11
Euro Gth	124.94	133.05	-0.89	-
Global Fund Inc	64.00	-	-	-
Higher Yld	112.78	117.48	0.21	3.56
Intl Spec Opt	180.07	187.57	-3.07	-
Amer Gth	183.21	196.76	-2.22	-
Man Port	57.88	60.07	-0.12	1.22
Pacific Gth	103.55	107.89	-0.12	0.01
Smaller Co's	182.79	190.40	0.19	0.47

Canada Life

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
General Acc	531.80	553.78	1.50	1.20
General Inc	287.90	283.90	0.80	1.20
Gilt & Fixed	43.96	46.19	0.05	4.86
Income Acc	517.80	548.80	-	3.11
Income Inc	153.50	162.60	-	3.11

Capel-Cure Myers

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
American Acc	297.20	314.90	-3.80	-
American Inc	279.80	298.20	-3.50	-
European Acc	124.59	132.30	-0.30	0.10
European Inc	116.80	123.80	-0.20	0.10
Japan & Gen A	44.89	47.52	0.39	-
Japan & Gen I	44.89	47.52	0.39	-
Growth Acc	1258.80	1339.30	-0.89	1.85
Growth Inc	670.70	713.60	-0.30	1.85
High Yield A	2556.00	2538.00	-	3.75
High Yield I	1827.00	1894.00	-	3.75
Inc & Gth Acc	885.70	952.90	2.89	4.17
Inc & Gth Inc	573.40	610.89	1.70	4.17
Smaller Co's	134.80	143.20	3.90	1.81
Spec Sits A	199.90	211.80	0.70	1.82
Spec Sits I	155.70	165.70	0.40	1.82

Cazenove

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
American	156.79	168.44	-1.47	0.72
European	157.18	167.31	-0.23	0.38
Japan	41.08	43.54	0.36	-
Pacific	108.52	114.54	-0.36	1.06
Portfolio	112.80	120.18	-0.22	2.33
Utility	65.19	69.05	0.28	5.15

CIS

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Environ	209.50	220.50	-0.90	1.54
UK Growth	262.80	276.70	-0.10	1.57
UK Income	185.80	195.60	-0.20	3.59

Commercial Union

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Far East Exempt	87.81	89.23	-1.44	1.27
Europe Exempt	209.27	212.10	2.81	1.35
Exempt	241.54	247.82	0.74	1.84
Deposit Acc	112.09	112.09	0.02	5.76
Deposit Inc	92.55	92.58	0.01	5.76
Equity Acc	883.52	930.85	-0.43	4.29
Equity Inc	226.98	238.46	-0.10	4.29
Fxd Conv Acc	158.67	168.01	0.34	6.57
Fxd Conv Inc	41.58	44.23	0.11	6.57
High Yld A	791.42	824.48	-0.64	5.85
High Yld I	163.85	170.87	-0.15	5.85
Europe Gth	262.09	273.04	2.67	0.49
Far East Gth	91.19	94.89	0.34	0.30
Global Bond	88.50	92.89	0.05	6.74
Mthly Inc Pls	69.23	61.76	0.14	7.28
Nth Amr Gth	297.87	310.31	1.02	-
Oriental Gth	35.73	59.08	0.21	0.84
Pref Acc	398.08	414.72	0.95	6.42
Pref Inc	59.26	60.60	0.15	6.42
UK Gth	241.59	251.78	0.41	1.58
Env Exempt Pen	80.16	82.02	1.12	1.86
Homemaker	99.13	105.47	0.28	2.85
Japan Gth	79.88	83.22	0.26	-
Managed Acc	114.45	119.23	0.34	2.42
Managed Inc	84.13	87.64	0.25	2.42
Quilter Acc	204.97	217.89	-0.87	1.74
Quilter Inc	188.95	180.89	-0.72	1.74
Smaller Acc	81.65	84.23	-0.15	1.58
Smaller Inc	51.55	53.70	-0.13	1.58
UK & Gen Acc	162.17	168.94	-0.79	2.15
UK & Gen Inc	121.01	126.07	-0.60	2.15
Wrldwde Gth Acc	81.51	85.82	0.36	0.32
Worldwide Gth Inc	77.55	81.21	0.34	0.32

Credit Suisse

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Fellowship T Inc	120.10	127.70	-0.10	1.15
High Income P	98.80	105.10	-	3.97
Inv Portfolio	102.40	108.90	-	1.58
Smaller Co's Inc	233.90	248.80	0.30	0.74
European Acc	83.15	88.35	-1.15	0.36
European Inc	81.31	86.50	-1.33	0.36
Oriental Fund	42.12	44.80	-0.22	-
South Africa	54.59	58.01	-0.26	1.32

EFM Unit Trust

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Convertible	24.63	26.17	-	5.35
EuroFund	75.49	80.00	-0.27	-
Growth & Inc	349.80	371.50	-0.70	2.36
High Dist	218.10	231.70	-0.30	3.67
Intl Income	114.60	122.96	-0.30	2.20
Intl & Cap Acc	429.10	455.90	-3.30	-
Intl & Cap Inc	425.20	451.80	-3.30	-
Latin	34.51	36.67	-0.16	-

(continued)

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Pacific	63.18	67.13	-0.45	-
Equity Inc	169.80	180.20	-0.20	3.55
Financial	70.25	74.85	-0.37	1.34
Tokyo Fund	134.80	142.40	0.10	-
Pref High Inc	26.25	27.89	0.05	6.45
Smaller Cos	255.40	271.40	-0.20	1.29

Eagle Star

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Growth Acc	47.79	50.83	-	3.34
Income Acc	48.71	51.77	-	5.99
Income Inc	48.71	51.77	-	5.99

Equitable Units

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Ethical Income	53.87	68.71	-0.21	1.18
European	111.53	117.40	-0.29	1.50
Far Eastern	208.21	217.06	0.27	2.10
High Income	170.31	179.27	0.22	4.02
Intl Gth	131.78	138.72	-0.24	1.30
Tst Of Inv	231.57	243.86	-0.78	1.53
N America	188.69	198.62	-2.17	1.41
Pelican	175.22	184.44	0.83	3.44
Smaller Cos	74.05	77.95	0.23	2.18
Spec Sits	90.54	95.31	-	2.75

Fidelity

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Intl Bond	28.04	28.99	-	5.42
Cash Fund	100.00	100.00	-	6.80
Amer Special	214.80	228.80	-3.20	-
American	407.90	433.10	-5.50	-
Asean	27.81	29.35	-0.28	-
1992 Euro Op	108.40	115.10	-0.20	0.50
Euro Tst	285.70	303.80	0.70	0.35
Gth & Inc	220.80	234.90	-0.08	2.55
Intl PEP	57.76	61.41	-0.29	1.12
Japan Spec	53.36	56.60	0.46	-
Japan Tst	141.20	149.60	1.50	-
Japan Small	16.10	17.07	-0.02	-
Managed Int	410.70	436.50	-2.80	0.82
Moneybuilder	74.84	75.17	-0.27	0.35
Recovery Tst	68.01	72.32	-0.16	1.89
Sth E Asia	143.20	152.50	-0.80	1.37
Special Sits	903.50	960.70	-1.19	1.18
UK Gth	152.20	161.59	-	1.30
Euro Inc	80.65	84.44	-0.12	1.74
High Income	81.23	82.79	-0.05	4.79
Income Plus	167.30	177.50	-0.40	3.81

Framlington

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Amer Gth Acc	99.17	105.29	-1.22	-
Amer Gth Inc	99.17	105.20	-1.22	-
Amer Smlr Acc	740.70	780.90	-8.10	-
Capital Acc	611.40	650.40	0.10	1.26
Capital Inc	410.80	436.80	-	1.26
Cred Sml Acc	69.48	74.29	-0.02	-
Cred Sml Inc	64.75	69.23	-0.02	-
Conv Acc	342.30	364.20	0.50	5.39
Conv Inc	147.20	156.60	0.20	5.36
Exempt Bal Acc	81.71	86.42	-0.12	2.49
Exempt Bal Inc	84.85	88.00	-0.11	2.49
Emerg Mkts Acc	58.46	63.53	-1.79	0.54
Emerg Mkts Inc	58.95	62.98	-1.79	0.54
Euro Acc	187.80	209.50	-0.50	-
Euro Inc	186.00	197.30	-0.50	-
Extra Acc	776.40	826.00	1.10	3.99
Extra Inc	471.20	501.80	0.60	3.99
Financial Acc	253.70	269.80	-0.70	0.84
Financial Inc	236.90	252.00	-0.60	0.84
Gilt Trust Acc	105.70	109.00	-	7.04
Gilt Trust Inc	84.20	86.20	0.05	7.04
Health Fund Acc	267.80	285.00	-1.29	-
Health Fund Inc	267.80	285.00	-1.20	-
Inc & Gth Acc	442.10	470.30	-0.20	3.54
Inc & Gth Inc	265.40	282.30	-0.10	3.54
Intl Gth Acc	486.60	518.20	-2.20	-
Intl Gth Inc	437.70	465.70	-2.00	-
Japan Acc	113.80	120.80	1.10	-
Japan Inc	112.70	119.50	1.10	-
Managed Acc	141.40	149.60	-0.40	1.32
Managed Inc	129.50	135.40	-0.30	1.32
Recovery Acc	341.60	363.20	0.20	-
Recovery Inc	289.40	308.50	0.20	-
UK Gth Acc	83.21	88.52	-0.03	1.79
UK Gth Inc	75.31	80.12	-0.02	1.79

Friends Provident

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Equity Acc	1257.00	1346.00	2.00	1.92
Euro Acc	401.50	428.20	-1.10	-
Intl Gwth Tst Acc	61.72	65.63	-0.03	0.08
Intl Gwth Tst Inc	41.87	44.66	-0.22	0.06
Nth Am Stew Acc	165.30	176.30	-3.60	-
Nth Am Stew Dist	153.60	163.60	-2.70	-
Stewardship Inc Acc	113.60	121.10	0.10	5.39
Stewardship Inc	77.91	83.10	0.02	5.39
Stewardship Acc	616.60	653.20	0.80	1.41
Stewardship	476.80	508.50	0.60	1.41

Gartmore

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Global Bond	27.45	28.48	-0.01	5.29
High Income	42.19	45.07	-0.09	3.05
UK Equity Inc	193.75	207.11	-0.83	1.80
Emerging Mkt	41.20	44.05	-0.07	-
Global Inc	169.17	180.08	-2.05	1.15

(continued)

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Gold & Intl	77.99	83.41	0.37	-
American Emrg	195.57	208.51	-1.10	-
American	238.89	252.78	-3.24	0.40
Euro Sel Op	260.15	276.97	-0.55	-
European	162.42	172.73	-0.29	0.54
Hong Kong	129.79	138.52	-0.17	1.94
Japan Tst	137.29	145.50	-0.14	-
Pacific Gth	120.13	120.13	0.53	2.32
Long Term Bal	308.12	308.12	0.25	2.88
UK Equity	367.18	367.18	0.75	1.93
Fixed Int	108.42	113.27	0.18	-
British Gth	74.19	79.50	-0.51	1.67
Cash Trust	154.73	154.73	0.02	6.83
Practical Inv Acc	338.22	361.73	-0.60	3.31
UK Smaller	260.43	267.84	0.54	0.83

GRE Unit Managers

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
European	690.30	737.50	-2.20	-
Gilt & Fixed	148.70	152.40	0.50	5.05
Growth Eq	498.70	533.80	1.20	1.04
Guardhill Acc	777.20	830.30	0.70	1.12
Guardhill Inc	716.50	767.60	0.80	1.12
International	215.80	230.50	-1.00	-
Income Trust	179.70	191.90	0.10	3.62
Japan	84.20	89.95	0.77	-
Nth American	428.40	458.70	-7.50	-
Pacific	347.50	371.29	-0.80	0.04

Guinness Mahon

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Asian Sml Cos	60.71	64.54	-0.40	0.89
Euro Gth	154.55	164.33	-0.58	-
EMU Trust	98.47	102.18	0.12	4.78
High Inc Acc	228.77	243.24	0.51	3.41
High Inc	152.65	161.67	0.34	3.41
Intl PEP	78.76	83.74	-0.66	0.49
Prem Fixed	108.64	112.77	-0.11	6.88
Recovery	604.80	643.00	-2.00	2.39
Recovery Inc	495.30	526.60	-1.60	2.39
St Vin Inc	145.85	148.03	-0.19	5.84
Temple Emerg Inc	282.00	299.70	0.30	3.58
Temple Sml Acc	571.90	583.70	-0.10	4.25
Temple Sml Inc	382.00	388.70	-0.10	4.25

Henderson

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Europ Inc	309.23	318.27	-1.42	1.10
Inc & Gth Inc	370.55	385.61	-1.23	2.81
Jap Inc	138.25	142.39	1.21	0.10
Nth Amer	260.21	268.91	-4.60	0.44
Pacific Inc	402.35	417.44	-0.48	3.17
High Income Inc	404.47	432.37	-0.81	3.71
Inc & Inc Acc	1087.57	1158.25	-4.18	2.72
Inc & Inc	369.33	393.33	-1.42	2.72
Pref & Gilt	58.56	59.40	0.06	7.16
Intl Global Bond	52.84	55.63	-	5.49
Intl Income Inc	337.37	358.34	-1.86	-
Asia Ext	142.47	152.34	-0.35	1.14
American Smll	214.50	228.18	-0.97	-
Euro Inc	110.57	116.96	-0.43	3.09
Euro Smll	209.90	221.35	0.54	0.38
European	769.16	815.77	-1.28	0.16
Japan Trust	113.19	120.03	0.14	-
Japan Spec	95.42	101.38	0.30	-
Nth Amer Ex	398.79	422.69	-6.25	-
Pacific Smll	149.80	159.54	-0.14	-
UK Smll	165.62	176.08	0.28	1.15
Best of Brit	88.81	92.97	-0.38	1.59

Hill Samuel

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
British Tst	152.80	160.00	-0.45	1.45
Capital Tst	227.58	238.26	-1.85	1.34
Dollar Tst	610.77	639.55	-8.51	-
European Tst	334.41	350.17	-0.94	-
Far East	189.59	198.39	-1.45	2.78
Financial	1380.14	1451.46	-7.74	1.41
Gilt & Fixed	28.82	29.98	0.09	5.82
High Yield	138.10	142.51	-0.27	4.04
Income Tst	201.01	210.48	-0.59	3.02
International	319.15	334.18	-2.39	0.41
Japan Gen	138.07	146.25	1.28	-
Japan Tech	61.41	64.30	0.58	-
Natural Res	56.27	58.92	-0.04	1.36
Special Sits	243.80	255.39	-0.58	0.72
UK Emerg	193.05	198.32	0.15	1.32
US Small Cos	188.05	196.91	-1.24	-

HSBC

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
American Gth	761.90	806.20	-12.10	-
American Ind	374.00	373.90	-6.60	0.49
Asia	36.17	38.80	-0.35	0.12
Capital	822.50	877.50	10.80	1.65
European Exmt	197.55	210.08	0.69	1.29
European Gth	191.80	204.20	-0.80	-
Eurotrack 100	243.00	244.20	-0.70	0.74
The Footsie	83.03	83.46	-0.09	2.09
Global Bond	20.57	21.86	-0.01	4.21
Hong Kong Gth	148.50	158.20	-0.80	0.37
Intl Gth	82.10	85.33	0.34	0.77
Income	795.10	849.60	-1.60	4.74
Jap Index	47.09	47.33	0.35	0.25
Jap Gth	200.00	212.40	1.60	-
Jap Sml Co	18.27	17.36	-0.22	-
North Amer Ex	165.02	165.82	0.58	1.45
Pacific Exempt	144.68	147.14	-1.45	2.74
Singpore & Mal G	39.01	42.59	-0.43	-
Tiger Index	83.57	86.87	-1.12	1.80

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	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Tr'ble Index	136.80	140.30	-	2.33
UK Index	206.50	207.80	-0.30	2.68
Midland Bal	87.05	91.15	-0.24	2.46
Midland Brit Tst	131.70	137.90	-0.50	1.89
Midland Income	396.50	415.30	-1.20	3.65

Invesco

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Exempt	213.40	222.80	-0.80	3.45
Ex-Euro Acc	226.60	235.30	-0.40	0.50
Ex-Euro Inc	208.50	217.50	-0.40	0.50
Gen Assets Acc	88.44	92.83	0.68	2.25
Gen Assets Inc	74.39	77.21	0.53	2.25
Gen Gr Br	50.05	51.95	0.60	2.41
Gen Equity	70.87	73.56	0.46	3.12
Gen Man Acc	96.49	100.80	-0.50	1.07
Gen Reps	131.70	137.50	-0.10	1.91
UK Growth	83.39	87.09	-0.22	1.82
American	71.70	74.45	-1.38	-
Euro Gth	286.80	301.10	-1.00	-
H.Kong & China	97.86	102.00	-0.62	0.56
Intl Growth	73.49	76.57	-0.46	-
Japan A	18.88	19.47	0.31	-
Japan Small	17.42	18.16	0.04	-
SE Asia	197.80	206.60	-1.10	0.65
Extra Inc	106.50	111.20	-0.20	4.80
Gilt Trust	28.69	29.82	0.09	7.29
UK Income	449.70	469.70	-1.40	3.64
Intl Bond	48.56	51.10	0.01	6.10
Smaller Cos	49.77	51.98	0.14	1.74

Kleinwort Benson

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Extra Acc	78.17	83.16	0.37	7.75
Extra Inc	50.97	54.22	0.23	7.75
Global Acc	608.50	647.30	-3.40	3.10
Global Inc	244.70	260.30	-1.40	3.10
Gilt Yield Acc	472.20	498.10	0.90	6.30
Gilt Yield Inc	128.50	135.50	0.20	6.30
High Yld A	670.90	713.70	-4.20	4.80
High Yld I	194.30	206.70	-1.70	4.80
Sml Cos Div A	96.57	102.70	0.17	3.60
Sml Cos Div I	69.32	73.74	0.12	3.60
Amer Sml A	196.00	208.50	-1.10	-
Amer Sml I	189.40	201.40	-1.10	-
Euro Spec A	165.40	176.90	0.10	-
Euro Acc	301.90	321.10	-0.20	0.60
Euro Inc	227.00	241.40	-0.10	0.50
General Acc	462.00	491.50	0.90	3.16
General Inc	269.60	286.80	0.50	3.16
Japan Acc	264.40	281.20	1.20	-
Japan Inc	261.50	278.10	1.20	-
Japan Spec A	117.80	125.10	-1.30	-
Japan Spec I	117.10	124.50	-1.20	-
Master Acc	248.90	267.10	-0.80	0.52
N Amer Acc	166.10	176.60	-2.80	-
Pacific A	384.90	409.50	7.00	-
Pacific I	17.74	19.09	-	-
Sml Cos Acc	223.10	237.30	0.60	1.00
Sml Cos Inc	159.40	169.50	0.60	1.00
Equity Gth A	118.10	123.60	-0.50	1.10
Equity Gth I	69.19	62.86	-0.24	1.10

Legal & General

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Equity Inc	123.50	123.50	-0.10	4.62
Equity Dist	724.59	724.50	0.20	2.04
European	175.40	175.40	-0.60	0.15
Far Eastern	150.00	150.00	-	-
Global Gth	78.84	78.84	-0.74	0.43
Gilt Tst	89.26	89.26	0.11	5.81
Intl Bond	48.77	48.77	-0.06	4.86
Japan	50.43	50.43	0.25	-
UK Smaller	178.40	178.40	0.10	1.19

Lloyds Bank

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Balanced Acc	1203.00	1280.00	-9.00	-
Balanced Inc	494.30	525.80	-5.80	-
Cont Euro Acc	101.50	106.90	-1.10	-
Cont Euro Inc	93.86	98.92	-1.20	-
Extra Acc	1606.00	1673.00	-10.00	-
Extra Inc	349.80	372.20	-4.10	-
German Acc	175.50	184.80	-0.30	-
German Inc	167.30	178.20	-0.30	-
UK Gth Acc	169.80	174.90	-1.89	-
UK Gth Inc	128.30	136.50	-1.50	-
Income Acc	2004.00	2132.00	-23.00	-
Income Inc	681.30	724.80	-8.80	-
Japan Acc	72.76	77.43	0.84	-
Japan Inc	72.53	77.16	0.84	-
Master Acc	88.46	94.11	-0.96	1.22
Master Inc	75.28	80.10	-0.82	1.22
N Amer Acc	353.30	375.80	-6.80	-
N Amer Inc	305.20	324.70	-5.80	-
Pacific Acc	166.30	177.00	-3.60	-
Pacific Inc	156.00	166.80	-2.80	-
Smaller Acc	756.80	798.70	-20.10	-
Smaller Inc	539.00	567.40	-14.20	-
Worldwide A	575.10	611.90	-4.50	-
Worldwide I	386.50	408.30	-4.10	-

M & G Securities

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Am & Gen A	781.80	825.50	-7.00	0.49
Am & Gen I	653.50	658.80	-5.80	0.49
Am Smll Acc	183.90	194.50	-1.70	-
Am Smll Inc	180.00	190.40	-1.60	-
Aus & Gen A	237.00	250.80	-1.20	2.00
Aus & Gen I	186.30	196.00	-0.90	2.60
Capital A	1358.40	1413.30	-1.20	2.68
Capital I	1092.10	1154.00	-1.00	2.68
Charifund Ac	5243.20	5295.70	5.80	5.06
Charifund In	949.60	959.10	1.10	5.06
Comp & Gth A	1469.40	1553.90	-0.60	2.00
Comp & Gth I	1298.20	1373.90	-0.50	2.00
Comm & Gen A	484.30	512.10	-3.40	1.45
Comm & Gen I	326.80	345.60	-2.40	1.45
Divi Acc	245.90	261.40	-	4.37
Divi Inc	52.40	55.40	-	4.37
Euro Div A	126.70	134.10	-0.50	3.42
Euro Div	96.70	102.30	-0.40	3.42
Equity Inc	377.20	399.50	-0.30	5.40
Euro & Gen A	962.80	1018.20	-3.30	0.56
Euro & Gen I	746.00	788.90	-2.50	0.56
Euro Sml Co I	56.50	59.70	-0.10	0.50
Extra Acc	1978.40	2090.10	2.10	4.67
Extra Inc	560.50	592.70	0.60	4.67
Fund Acc	1495.80	1581.80	-1.80	1.47
Fund Inc	762.70	806.60	-0.90	1.47
Gen Fund Acc	262.70	277.80	0.60	3.50
Gen Fund Inc	85.00	89.90	0.30	3.50
Gilt & Fixed Acc	223.24	229.63	0.51	5.70
Gilt & Fixed Inc	68.84	68.97	0.15	5.70
Gold & Gen Acc	43.60	48.20	0.60	1.03
Gold & Gen Inc	37.80	40.00	0.40	1.03
High Acc	179.80	190.20	0.40	4.29
High Inc	39.80	42.10	0.10	4.29
Intl Gth Acc	164.00	183.00	-0.90	0.49
Intl Gth Inc	86.60	91.50	-0.50	0.49
Int Acc	207.40	219.40	-0.80	4.09
Int Inc	124.90	132.10	-0.50	4.09
Jap & Gen Acc	23.00	24.20	-	0.21
Jap & Gen Inc	21.40	22.60	-	0.21
Jap Small A	72.80	76.80	-0.70	0.19
Jap Small I	72.30	76.30	-0.70	0.19
Midland Acc	238.10	252.10	0.30	2.60
Midland Inc	66.10	69.90	0.10	2.60
Managed Growth	28.30	29.90	-0.10	1.55
Managed Income	34.50	36.20	-	4.15
Pension Ex	1262.80	1314.90	0.70	3.39
Recovery Acc	96.80	102.40	-0.10	2.78
Recovery Inc	54.50	57.60	-	2.78
Amer Rec A	887.20	938.20	-5.40	0.36
Amer Rec I	767.10	811.20	-4.70	0.36
Second Acc	234.70	248.90	-0.20	3.95
Second Inc	82.10	86.80	-0.10	3.95
Smaller Acc	148.40	156.90	0.20	2.61
Smaller Inc	69.80	73.80	0.10	2.61
Trustee Acc	231.00	244.80	0.10	4.67
Trustee Inc	50.90	53.80	0.10	4.67

Martin Currie

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Emerg Markets	78.37	83.82	-0.97	0.69
European	122.60	130.10	-0.80	0.36
Far East	131.00	139.10	-0.40	-
Income	99.44	105.80	-0.12	4.12
Inc Gwth	137.50	146.00	-1.00	0.89
Nth American	114.10	121.10	-1.70	0.24
UK Growth	144.20	153.10	-	2.52

Mercury

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Br Blue Chip Acc	158.50	169.00	-0.10	2.59
Cash Acc	157.00	157.00	-	5.37
Cash	101.00	101.00	-	5.81
European Inc	100.10	105.90	0.56	3.85
Emerg Mkts Acc	126.50	136.00	-3.00	0.33
Euro Gwth Dist	395.30	418.90	-1.50	0.13
Global Bnd Acc	177.20	183.30	-	4.68
Global Bnd	127.40	133.80	-	4.65
Income	231.60	247.00	-0.40	3.84
New Euro Acc	296.50	316.30	1.00	0.93
Portfolio	106.80	113.40	-0.20	2.62
Recovery Acc	725.00	774.20	3.00	1.61
Recovery	542.20	578.30	2.20	1.61

Morgan Grenfell

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
American	561.90	596.80	-7.70	-
European	618.70	657.20	-1.20	-
International	254.20	269.80	-2.30	-
UK Equity Acc	372.10	395.60	-0.80	3.66
UK Equity Inc	282.90	278.60	-0.50	3.66

Murray Johnstone

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Acumen Rec	110.20	111.30	0.30	6.11
Acumen Acc	118.70	122.40	-0.10	2.12
American Gth	77.05	78.87	-0.85	-
European	86.75	86.76	-0.20	-
Smaller Cos	95.22	99.37	-0.05	1.67
Olympiad	82.55	84.40	-0.46	0.15

National Provident

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
American Acc	164.90	173.80	1.10	0.01
American Inc	151.90	159.90	1.10	0.01
Far East Acc	120.30	126.60	0.40	0.05
Far East Inc	118.40	124.60	0.50	0.05
Global	71.41	75.17	0.08	3.58
Overseas Acc	1403.70	1477.80	7.90	0.18
Overseas Inc	1078.80	1135.60	6.00	0.16
UK Acc	1080.60	1137.70	1.00	1.59
Worldwide Acc	125.30	131.90	0.30	0.36
Worldwide Inc	96.78	101.87	0.35	1.83

National Westminster

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
UK Eq Gth Acc	94.02	99.23	-0.35	1.46
UK Eq Gth Inc	84.76	89.46	-0.32	1.46
Euro Acc	96.05	101.37	-0.09	0.36
Euro Inc	94.89	99.94	-0.09	0.36

(continued)

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Far East	50.88	53.70	-0.22	0.37
UK Gen Acc	88.88	94.65	-0.22	1.57
UK Gen Inc	78.02	83.40	-0.20	1.57
Gilt & Fxd Acc	65.05	68.51	0.07	5.74
Gilt & Fxd Inc	50.33	53.00	0.06	5.74
Income Acc	93.54	98.72	-0.35	2.20
Income Inc	79.38	83.78	-0.30	2.20
Japan	44.55	47.03	-0.07	-
N Amer Acc	78.87	83.24	-1.09	-
N Amer Inc	78.69	83.05	-1.07	-

Newton Unit Trust

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Intl Bond	133.23	141.73	-	4.50
General	256.40	272.76	-0.70	1.09
Growth	164.04	174.51	-0.10	1.08
Income	339.35	361.01	-5.08	2.52

Pearl Unit

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Equity Tst Acc	767.10	816.00	0.50	1.72
Equity Tst Inc	340.30	361.90	0.30	1.72
Growth Acc	425.80	448.20	0.20	2.02
Income Fund	329.40	350.40	-0.20	3.32
Int Equity Acc	330.90	352.00	-2.30	0.39
Int Equity Inc	294.60	313.40	-2.10	0.39
New Euro Tst	125.50	133.50	-0.50	-
UK Income	89.18	94.86	-1.45	4.54
UK Smaller	109.90	116.80	-0.10	1.49

Perpetual

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
American Gth	358.65	381.89	-1.61	0.01
Euro Gth	236.86	253.11	0.13	0.01
Far East	229.65	246.62	1.25	1.38
High Income	146.93	157.15	-0.29	2.59
Income	559.57	596.48	-1.16	2.35
Intl Emerg	292.09	312.40	-0.36	0.16
Intl Gth	772.81	826.54	-1.69	0.35
PEP Gwth	165.42	176.92	-0.35	0.42
UK Growth	154.55	165.30	-0.18	2.15
Worldwide Rec	488.94	524.00	-0.25	0.33

Prolific

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Amer Inc	149.70	158.90	-1.50	1.98
Conv & Gilt	131.50	139.90	-0.10	3.89
Extra Income	212.50	226.10	-1.50	4.02
Far Eastern	282.90	300.90	-1.70	1.50
Euro Gth Acc	113.40	120.70	-0.10	0.62
High Income	161.40	171.60	-0.10	3.92
International	229.50	244.20	-0.20	0.57
Nth American Acc	251.00	265.60	-4.40	0.34
Pref & Fxd I	53.07	56.46	0.16	5.74
Special Sits Acc	183.70	195.40	-0.10	1.62
Technology	714.80	760.20	-11.30	-

Prudential

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Equity	1058.21	1123.63	-3.94	1.88
European	338.26	360.53	-1.32	0.54
High Inc	106.31	112.03	-0.12	4.56
Intl Sm Cos	93.79	99.78	-0.17	0.69
Intl Gth	224.47	238.80	-1.26	1.01
Japanese	102.16	106.69	0.66	-
Nth American	292.87	313.44	-3.84	0.80
Premier	50.87	52.94	0.07	5.48
Small Cos	117.03	124.50	0.21	1.55
Special Sits	145.67	154.97	-0.41	1.72
UK Growth	179.04	190.47	-0.65	1.57

NM Rothschild Asset

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Smaller Cos	451.29	469.72	-	1.27
UK Equity Inc	-	-	-	-

Save & Prosper

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Equity Pens	114.20	120.80	0.70	-
Am Emrg Co	169.70	180.50	-1.00	-
UK & Overseas	222.80	237.00	-1.10	0.71
China Dragon	57.42	61.08	-0.38	0.25
Cash Fund	143.40	143.40	-	5.53
Euro Growth	291.90	310.50	-1.60	-
Euro Sml Cos	75.98	80.83	-0.47	-
Fin Secs	423.50	450.50	-1.40	1.22
Gold & Exp	36.24	38.55	0.45	-
Growth Fund	511.80	544.50	-1.60	1.43
High Income	53.69	53.69	0.19	5.03
High Yield	263.60	280.40	-4.20	2.68
International	156.60	166.50	0.10	5.10
ITU	258.20	272.60	-0.20	1.01
Japan Gth	107.50	114.00	0.40	-
Japan Small	87.55	92.89	-0.44	-
Korea Fund	9.86	10.59	0.20	-
Southern Africa	44.12	46.94	-0.47	1.22
Scotyields	287.90	306.30	-5.10	2.27
SE Asia Gth	30.30	32.23	-0.53	0.25
UK Gth & Inc	379.20	397.00	-0.30	2.58
UK Smllr Cos	65.36	69.53	0.06	0.90
US Gth	280.00	297.80	-4.40	-

Schroder

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Enterprise	389.82	414.86	-	2.05
Far Eastern	80.85	86.02	-0.73	0.29
Jap Sm Cos	195.10	208.10	-2.38	-
Tokyo	94.22	100.50	0.29	-

Scottish Equitable

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Int Acc	577.98	615.67	-4.24	1.34
Int Inc	322.57	343.77	-2.37	1.34

Scottish Life

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
American	381.50	401.60	0.40	-
UK Equity	523.60	551.30	-1.00	-
European	662.20	697.10	-4.20	-
Pacific	378.50	398.60	4.70	-
Worldwide	149.60	157.50	1.30	-

Scottish Widows

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Equity	533.20	563.90	0.80	2.02
European Acc	614.50	649.30	5.60	0.37
European Inc	576.80	609.30	5.30	0.37
UK High Inc Acc	410.10	433.30	1.10	3.05
UK High Inc Inc	256.60	271.10	0.70	3.05

Sun Life of Canada

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
UK Gth	80.04	85.15	-0.04	1.71
UK Inc	55.48	58.94	-0.04	4.12
Worldwide Gth	45.16	48.30	-0.18	0.54

Sun Life

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Mngd High Acc	155.60	165.50	-1.30	3.85
Mngd Inc Acc	136.30	145.00	-1.30	2.59
Mngd Inc & Gth	102.80	109.10	-0.90	2.59
Mngd Gwth Acc	111.90	119.00	-0.80	0.28
UK Sml Cos	44.15	46.97	-0.08	1.94
UK Grower	114.10	121.40	0.60	2.05
UK Income	74.80	78.57	-0.83	2.53

Thornton

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Exempt Inc	813.80	851.90	-2.70	2.70
Exempt Acc	2915.40	3052.80	-8.90	2.70
Intl Gth Ac	113.02	120.55	-1.55	0.62
Intl Gth In	103.80	110.71	-1.42	0.62
N Amer Inc	377.80	395.30	-5.80	0.40
Pref Acc	989.30	1035.90	0.40	7.60
Pref Inc	150.40	157.40	-	7.60
Sml Div Ac	177.60	185.90	0.20	5.80
Sml Div In	90.30	94.55	0.09	5.80
UK Gth Inc	787.70	824.70	-1.20	0.80

Threadneedle

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Accum Tst	-	-	-	-
American Inc	85.95	91.29	0.22	1.78
Conv & Gilt	58.16	61.89	-0.10	3.44
Equity Inc	338.80	359.40	-3.10	3.74
Growth & Inc	393.20	398.20	-1.80	2.59
Govt Secs	38.12	40.24	-0.17	5.16
High Income	-	-	-	-
High Yield	362.80	387.50	-2.10	3.26

Trade Union

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
British Fund	503.03	529.50	0.02	2.16
European Fund	97.10	101.70	0.03	1.09

TSB Unit Trusts

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
American Acc	412.80	436.83	-5.64	-
American Inc	374.75	396.58	-5.12	-
Br Gth Acc	190.20	201.27	-0.64	1.43
Br Gth Inc	150.12	158.86	-0.51	1.43
Environmental A	114.21	120.86	-0.34	0.67
Environmental I	100.49	106.34	-0.30	0.67
European Acc	162.92	172.40	-0.57	-
European Inc	152.53	161.41	-0.54	-
Extra Acc	495.77	524.62	-1.03	3.97
Extra Inc	259.08	274.17	-0.54	3.97
General Acc	946.22	1001.29	-2.81	1.80
General Inc	435.09	460.41	-1.21	1.80
Income	454.32	481.34	-1.37	4.06
Int Acc	916.78	970.14	-4.80	0.28
Nat Res Ac	130.01	137.58	0.07	0.72
Nat Res In	118.24	125.12	0.06	0.72
Pacific Acc	273.15	289.05	-1.33	2.14
Pacific Inc	259.96	275.08	-1.26	2.14
Premier Inc	55.75	58.99	0.13	5.62
Selected Acc	205.23	217.18	-0.72	0.91
Selected Inc	154.03	163.00	-0.55	0.91
Small Cos A	111.82	118.11	0.12	0.83
Small Cos I	96.61	102.23	0.10	0.53

Waverley Asset

	Bid	Offer	Change on prior	Yield
Aust Gold	11.83	12.45	0.47	-
Pac Basin	19.82	20.86	0.20	-
Penny Share	41.09	43.25	0.10	-

Price service supplied by Bloomberg Financial

Bargain hunters brave the gales as overstocked stores look for sales salvation, page 10

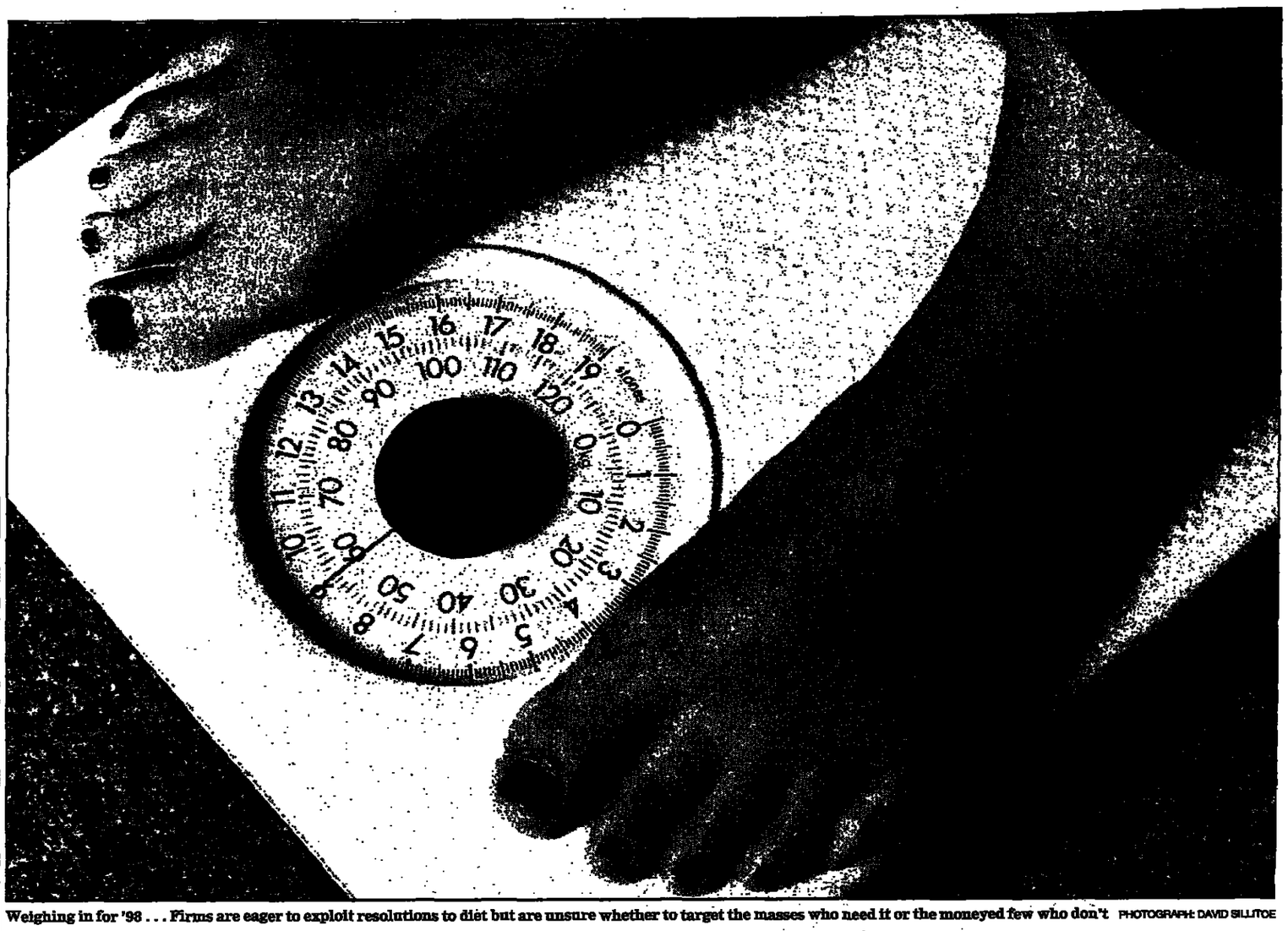
Korea plays with the big boys, page 10

Shares of 97: how our tips fared, page 11

Finance **Guardian**

Fat is a financial issue

Obesity has become a life-threatening disease, and despite the profits to be made on slimming products there's still little sign of a miracle cure, says LISA BUCKINGHAM



Weighing in for '98 . . . Firms are eager to exploit resolutions to diet but are unsure whether to target the masses who need it or the moneyed few who don't PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID SILLITOE

AS THE midnight chimes ring out next Wednesday nearly a third of all adults in this country will resolve — many of them for the umpteenth time — that they really *will* lose some weight in the New Year.

Along with giving up smoking, going on a diet is one of the most popular resolutions.

But the long-term success rate for would-be abstainers is demoralising. The cost to Britain's healthcare budget is equally dispiriting, with each group accounting for 3-8 per cent of total spend. That is about the amount allocated to cancer treatments or to the global killer, Aids.

"The effects of obesity are comparable with those of smoking, and the medical profession is beginning to wake up to the fact that being overweight is the most chronic body disease," said Dr Paul Conley of the Wilkerson Group, a healthcare and pharmaceuticals consultancy.

No wonder drugs and food firms are going hell for leather to develop something that the nation's millions of fatties will be able to regard as a wonder cure.

They are cashing in on a distinct change in attitude towards being overweight.

Superficially, it seems as if most people care far too much about what size they are, and those who are concerned are already slimming themselves to the point of extinction.

Women's groups have also campaigned furiously against pressure applied by the advertising industry to conform with images presented by perfect, size 10 models.

Underpinning these perceptions is the notion that our body size is something over which, albeit reluctantly, we have control — all that is needed to shed unwanted pounds is a little willpower.

A recent article in the medical journal, the Lancet, written by Per Bjorntorp of the University of Gothenburg, began: "Obesity is a disease that is neglected — indeed, frequently it is not thought of as a disease but as a self-inflicted condition, easily prevented and cured by self-control and determination."

The repercussions of being clinically obese are so severe that the medical profession is looking at the issue anew. Conditions such as diabetes, high blood-pressure and heart disease increase exponentially with the rise in body fat, as do other less obvious illnesses, such as cancer.

About one in three people is regarded as overweight, with roughly half that number classed as clinically obese. Dr Conley says this is largely because the proportion of fat in diets is rising; fat is high in calories but is dense, and therefore less likely to fill up the stomach quickly.

After the second world war less well-off people simply could not afford to be fat. Now, experts say, obesity is a problem of the lower social classes — the so-called "hamburger and chips brigade".

But it is often these people who are less knowledgeable about diet and excercise, and so will be lured into buying eye-catching and expensive "slimming" products.

"Doctors are beginning to look at coupling diet with some of the newer drugs. But if you are overweight there is no magic about it — you are simply eating more in terms of calories than you are expending in terms of excercise," said one GP.

Dr Conley added: "It is a huge market because people want an easy cure. But if they start taking a slimming drug, they could be taking it for years. The dilemma for the drugs industry is whether to aim for the seriously obese or go for the mass market of slightly less fat people."

But the history of miracle cures is chequered, and there is little to indicate their reliability is improving. Two new fat-busting drugs were withdrawn in the autumn by Servier after the US Food and Drug Administration received reports suggesting they might damage the heart.

They had been the first slimming drugs approved by the FDA for 23 years, and had been expected to generate sales of about $1 billion (£600 million) a year.

The FDA — which has traditionally been resistant to drugs that need to be taken virtually indefinitely — has indicated it regards obesity as a severe health problem, and so would listen with an open ear to new applicants.

Aware of this recent change, pharmaceutical groups Roche and BASF are dusting down their own slimming drugs. The BASF compound is based on an anti-depressant developed by Boots which has strong appetite-suppressant effects, rather like those linked to the housewife's friend, Prozac.

Partly because of the population's affluence and bigger average body size, but partly because of its medical system, the US will always be the most promising market for weight-loss products. Just look at the sympathetic reception given to Sarah Ferguson, the Duchess of York, when she became Weight Watchers' patron.

In Britain, where the average weight has risen by one kilogram in the past decade and where a national diet could cut £1 billion a year off health service costs, doctors are paid a yearly per capita fee. This means they will not welcome seeing patients for regular weigh-ins or to keep a close eye on the use of drugs.

But in the US, doctors are paid by the visit, and are happy for overweight patients to pop in every few days so that slimming treatments can be closely monitored.

BUT while drugs are experiencing a rough ride, other slimming products, such as low calorie drinks, vitamin-charged milks, weight-loss magazines, gyms and the health pages of national newspapers, are notching up a boom. They captured approaching $35 billion trading in the US alone last year.

Such figures are hard to come by, because retailers regard sales as commercially sensitive, but revenues do tend to surge as New Year resolutions are employed to tackle the overindulgence of the Christmas period. The growing value of diet and health-conscious brands is reflected in the rumours that Heinz may try to sell its Weight Watchers brand.

But one inconsistency in the diet industry is that so much advertising is aimed at the "wrong" type of people — the already health and fitness-aware middle classes who may spend a lot but whose weight loss will make no difference to the overall health of the nation.

John Wilding, writing in the Clinical Review, described obesity as "an epidemic". And it is one which promises fortunes for those supplying any reasonably successful product.

But such success will to some degree exploit the selective memory of many overweight people who, in trial after trial, substantially underestimate what they eat. It will also capitalise on our lack of time and energy — high-fat foods and driving home from work rather than a brisk walk followed by a plate of cabbage.

"Everyone knows that people have to be educated to change their diet and eating lifestyle," said Dr Conley, who admits that only a tiny proportion of people have a glandular problem which might affect their weight.

He concludes: "The slimming industry is very powerful. And it is certainly not interested in people eating well and staying thin."

Food for thought

IT LOOKS like a slimmer's dream come true: eat what you want and yet lose weight. Next week, January 8, sees the launch of the latest attempt to capture a slice of the lucrative slimming market when the British bio-tech company, Scotia, launches its Ileal Brake yoghurt.

It does not sound like the sort of thing you would want to down at breakfast, but Scotia is planning to reveal the results of clinical trials which suggest Ileal Brake has a significant impact in cutting down the desire for food.

The product, says the company, quickly and strongly activates the sensors in the small intestine which normally send a signal to the brain when enough food has been eaten.

The eater experiences an early feeling of fullness, and so is able to cut down on calorie consumption voluntarily.

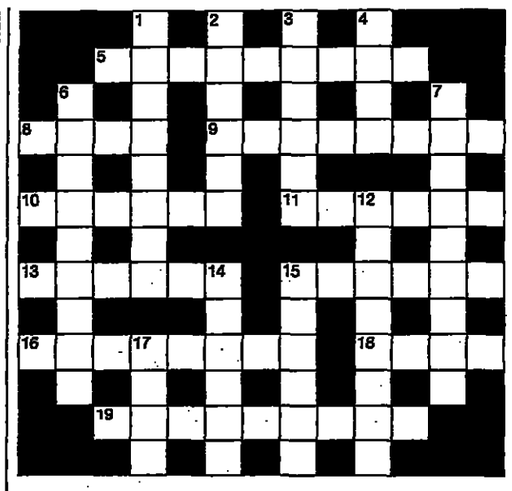
The impact of Ileal Break's effects, say Scotia's trials, lasts for between three and six hours, and may also reduce food intake at the following meal.

Scotia says that its new product can be added to a range of foods or taken on its own at the beginning of a meal in order to encourage a reduced intake.

It is less clear, however, whether dieters would have to include Ileal Brake as a permanent part of their diet or whether they would be able gradually to educate their own bodies to expect less food.

Quick Crossword No. 8629

Solution No. 8628



Across

5 Work together (2-7)
8 Worry (4)
9 In the sky or on the roof? (8)
10 Physical damage (6)
11 Stand-in (6)
13 It expands in a car crash (3-3)
15 Faith — honour — financial plus (6)
16 Disaster in nuclear reactor (8)
18 Express sorrow or relief (4)
19 Measure of obesity? (9)

Down

1 Diminutive fairytale hero (3,5)
2 Eerie (6)
3 Close and trusted acquaintance (6)
4 Craving (4)
6 Cromwell's soldiers (9)
7 Game bird (9)
12 Game bird (8)
14 Game bird (6)
15 Light (is the game worth it?) (6)
17 Snare (4)

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The Guardian
the week
Saturday December 27 1997

ILLUSTRATION BY CHRISTOPHER SHARROCK

Jael

Memories — of a bloody biblical execution, a schoolgirl accident, a talent for invention — disturb a woman under pressure, in this original short story by **AS Byatt**

I remember very clearly Mrs Hodges said "What a lovely colour, Jess," and I spread it further and further across the page of the scripture book. If you got five "A"s in a row, you got sent to the headmistress to be congratulated, and I had got as far as four, though none of us thought Scripture counted, compared to English, or History, or Science. It was a lovely colour, it was a true vermilion, and I spread it and spread it, all over the page.

I had a good box of pencils, about 24 colours, including some unusual pinks and turquoises. You could get quite convincing flesh colours with those pencils, but I wasn't much good at drawing. In fact I had made Jael's head-dress fall forward over her face, and concentrated on her arm and the hammer, and the tent-peg, and the great sheet of blood stemming out like a great *river* into a sheet, or a cloth, over the couch he lay on, and the floor of Jael's tent, and the greyish, over-absorbent lined page of my exercise book.

I don't really think I asked myself at the time why we were being asked to illustrate this very odd tale. I really don't think so. Nor do I really think there is any reason why I remember that drawing more than any other in that exercise book. I can't, for instance, remember what I got the four "A"s for, even whether I got an "A" for my rendering of Jael's neat and bloody disposal of Sisera.

I wasn't particularly trying to please Mrs Hodges, who was not religious, she was a history teacher doing her stint at Scripture, as most of them did. Scripture didn't have important teachers, either, and got shared out as a chore.

She was unusual, in those days (the early 1950s) for being married. She had a lot of long curly dark hair, and red lips, and wickedly pointed very high heels, on which she clipped along between our desks. Youngish, for a teacher at that good, ancient establishment for girls. Not a good teacher, you remember those. I am quite sure, though I don't remember a word she did say, that she gave us no explanation of why we had to *study* and illustrate that peculiarly disagreeable and morally equivocal story.

Anyway, for some good reason, the experience of making that pool of red with my good pencil on the bad paper has stayed with me. I was *telling the cameraman* in the studio in Brussels about it, over lunch. We were talking about how your past life is mapped two ways, with significant things that of course you remember, births, marriages, deaths, journeys, successes and failures, and then the other sort, the curiously bright-coloured, detailed pointless moments that won't go away. He's in his early thirties, he looked a bit sorry for me, when I told him about Jael, that I was old enough to have memories so far back. So small and bright and faraway, like illuminations in manuscripts.

We discussed the horrible story, and he was very struck by it. (He had a completely religion-free upbringing. I don't think he even opened a Bible in his life.) I said, and I'm sure I'm right, that I didn't think I was remembering it for its shocking morals, I said I was sure I was remembering it because of the excitement I'd felt over spreading more and more of that red over the paper. Like the blown-up and up shot we used in the Spanaranja commercial, all those glistening exploding sacs lying together in a segment of a blood orange. You didn't get much intense sensuous excitement at Armadale High School, GPDST.

Anyway, that caused me to think, not for the first time, about Jael and Sisera. I'm sure all those scripture stories we did at the ages of nine and 10 are the reason I find religion not only incredible, but disgusting and dangerous. At that stage, you're already doing bits of Shakespeare, at least at the kind of segregated high-powered school I was at, and even if you say or believe, you're bored or indifferent, there are all those passionate people, all those complicated motives, all that singing language, all the power, and later, you know it changed you forever. But the Scriptures were both dead and nasty. And all we did was illustrate them, frame by frame, the Coat of Many Colours, the Manna in the Wilderness, the Plagues, Jael and Sisera.

Explaining it to Jed, our cameraman, I said, it's not even a story about treachery or loyalty. I told it him from memory, as it came into my head whenever I saw that red sheet. It happens in the book of Judges, when the Judge, unusually, is a woman, Deborah. (No, we were not offered her as a role-model for leadership qualities. I'm not sure the concept existed in the 1950s. If it did, she wasn't it, more likely Florence Nightingale or Elizabeth Fry.) The Israelites as usual had done evil in the sight of the Lord who sold them into the hands of *Jabin King of Canaan, whose captain*, Sisera, mightily oppressed them with 900 chariots of iron for 20 years. Then Deborah traps Sisera in the river of Kishon.

The Bible says "The Lord discomfited Sisera and all his chariots, and all his host, with the edge of the sword." The Lord did his own killing at that point of the Bible, but Deborah organised it.

Sisera got out of his chariot, and fled away on his feet, and came to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, who was at peace with Sisera's King Jabin. And Jael said to Sisera, "Turn in my lord, turn in to me; fear not." And he went in, and when he asked for water, she opened a bottle of milk, and covered him, and invited him to rest. And he asked her to stand in the door of the tent, and say no man had come that way. The next bit I have always known by heart.

"Then Jael, Heber's wife, took a nail of the tent, and took an hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground: for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died."

Now I think about it, it's a story about the breaking of all the primitive laws of hospitality, and kindness, laws we learn even from *fairy-stories. Jael was not Sisera's* enemy; she enticed him and gratuitously betrayed him. The next chapter of the Bible (Judges 5) is Deborah's song of triumph. It is full of amazing rhythms, in the King James Bible. It is a nasty piece of work. Listen.

"Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be, blessed shall she be above women in the tent.

"He asked water, and she gave him milk; she brought forth butter in a lordly dish.

"She put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workmen's hammer; and with the hammer she smote Sisera, she smote off his head, when she had pierced and stricken through his temples.

"At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down; at her feet he bowed, he fell: where he bowed, there he fell down dead.

"The mother of Sisera looked out at a window, and cried through the lattice, why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariots?

"Her wise ladies answered her, yea, she returned answer to herself.

"Have they not sped? Have they not divided the prey; to every man a damsel or two; to Sisera a prey of divers colours, a prey of diverse colours of needlework on both sides, meet for the necks of them that take the spoil?

"So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord."

I love the rhythms of that. I love to think of those 17th-century *bishops, in a world where bishops* were regularly burned for believing, or not believing things, making those rhythms. "At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down; at her feet he bowed, he fell; where he bowed there he fell down dead."

I don't know what Hebrew rhythm they were echoing, but the English is done with heavy monosyllables, strokes of the hammer, strokes of the axe, and yet it flows, too. All those rhythms and phrases are vanishing from our world. My mother, every time she opened the fridge, would say, "Here is the butter in a lordly dish" and when I found it in the Bible, it was a piece fitting into a cultural jigsaw. It is a long time ago. The fridge was our first, and very new. In the war, our milk and butter were in earthenware pots under wet muslin veils, weighted with little heavy clay beads, red and blue.

When I did the Grenadine commercial, I made a red-Silk tent that made great pools of red light on a glittery sandy floor. The politically incorrect desert warrior poured the crimson juice from a kind of Venetian claret jug. There was a lordly dish on a low table, with a great swirling pyramid of something creamy that caught the pink light. Lara who is my assistant director and wants my job, says you can't make images like that any more. People have the wrong associations to desert warriors and captive pale maidens.

She just looked blank when I told her that I'd also been playing with the image of Persephone, eating pomegranate seeds in the underworld, with dusky-skinned gloomy Dis. I had a lovely plate of the seeds, too, another richer, if less lordly, dish, next to the buttery stuff, little bits of pink jelly, glistening. I shouldn't have told her about Persephone; it convinced her even more that I'm passé, in need of replacement, encumbered with dead cultural baggage.

Then Jael took an hammer . . . and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground . . .

I might have done better to tell her about my other idea, about *hand grenades being called* grenades, like Grenadine, because they resemble pomegranates, in shape, and in being full of explosive seeds. What a delicious metaphor, sheets of red juice, explosions of extreme sensuality, *sheets of red blood*. Attached to nothing, it's just the quirky way my mind works.

I got a First at Cambridge, writing Empsonian essays unpacking complicated multiple metaphors. Unpacking's a more modern word, we didn't use it then, you could make a film where you opened a velvet ball and floods of red silk and light filled the screen — what would you use that for? It's odd to be a pointless poet who doesn't make poems, only commercials for fruit drinks. I enjoy it. It's never dull. Lately it's become a bit frightening.

Anyway, Jael. Why do I remember Jael? Metaphors. I do know — I have always known — that I felt a faint click of symmetry as I drove the point of my pencil into the paper. Pencil, peg. Another *detached* image, like the grenade. Pointed. Pointless. I do also know that whenever I remem*ber that patch of fierce colour, like* an after-image, a kind of dreadful murky colour, a yellow-khaki-mustard-*thick* colour, that is the colour of the days of our boredom. For we were not unhappy girls, we were cared-for, nice, clever girls, and we were bored.

It's quite hard to think back to that time. All the buildings were the same colours, green and cream. We wore milk-chocolate-coloured gymslips over khaki-coloured shirts, with what was then amiably called nigger-brown ties. I do not believe any of us thought of the nasty meaning of those words, nigger-brown, we just recognised the colour.

Ignorance, innocence, boredom. It's strange how I hesitate, out of fear, to write down the true fact that we used that word, in that unloaded way. It's so long ago, we shall be judged without being imagined. All the excitement of life was in books. Jane Eyre, with her burning bed-curtains, or being punished in the Red Room (I've made films with both those images, fire insurance and children's furniture). Ivanhoe charging, Robin Hood in the dappled green light with his bow, escaping across the breaking ice, wolves and narwhals, volcanoes and tidal waves, excitement was all in books, none of it, nothing at all, seeped out into life.

We were the pre-television age, and we cannot — that is, the absolute quality of our boredom cannot — be imagined by those who *grew up with the magic lantern*, the window on the world, the Pandora's box peopling the world with temptations and emotions and *knowledge* and other places and people in the corner of the lounge/sitting room/front room.

I know young people now have a worked-up nostalgia for an imaginary time when families communicated, people made things, played games instead of passively watching. Now and then we did. I remember the physical pleasure of frenzied playground skipping. I remember the passionate life with which I invested a collection of lead ponies. But mostly — apart from books — I remember this smeared, fuggy, limited light of boredom, where you couldn't see very much or very far, and the horizon was unimaginable.

Human beings are human beings, Lara and the cameraman might say. You must have had loves and hatreds, friends and enemies, then, as now. We did have gangs. *We had two gangs, in our class, to* be precise. They were called, unimaginatively, after their "leaders". One was Wendy's gang, and one was Rachel's gang.

Wendy's gang was bigger, because Wendy was the most popu*lar girl in the class, which was sur*prising, perhaps, since she was also both the cleverest girl and the best at sports, more or less. She came top in English, and top in maths (and top in Scripture, as far as I can remember — Scripture, as I said, didn't count.) She won races, particularly long-distance ones, particularly the junior school cross-country run.

Wendy was good-looking in a completely inoffensive, unexceptionable away. She had honey-blonde hair, blue eyes, a broad brow, a wide mouth. She was tall, but not too tall, she was developing into a woman, but not awkwardly. She was a *nice* girl. It wasn't fair that she should have everything, and be nice with it, but that was how it was. She was the person in the parable of the talents who was given 10 talents and industriously made another 10 talents. (Did I see myself as the servant with the one talent, who hid it in the earth in case it got stolen?)

Rachel was dark, and sinewy, good too at games but not page 14

Talking on the homophone

IAN MAYES OPEN DOOR

THIS COLUMN is, of course, written for readers of the Guardian, but since what follows is, for journalists, a little humbling perhaps I may be forgiven for reminding my colleagues at the outset of the words of Professor Plumb (England In The Eighteenth Century). "Nothing," he tells us, "blights the creative spirit so much as fear of a solecism."

It is now nearly two months since I took up the job of Readers' Editor, monitoring the errors of our ways in a daily corrections and clarifications column, and reporting and commenting on the concerns of readers in this space every Saturday. In that time only two readers have written *aghast at the number of corrections* we have printed and to express the fear that the effect of their publication might be to inhibit the journalists. One, a former journalist himself, felt the corrections column might even work to undermine the journalistic integrity of the paper.

There is no evidence that either of these things is happening. The journalists will do as I did a couple of weeks ago when two readers wrote to point out that in this column I had used "affect" instead of "effect" — kick themselves and carry on, their creative spirit unblighted.

Which brings me to Mr Benedict Nixon, a retired computer scientist, who, prompted by our recent admission of confusion over "pedal" and "peddle", has written to reveal that he has been keeping a record of howlers of this kind "since the introduction of new technology . . . led to the disappearance of Grauniad-type errors. Direct keyboarding seems however to have led to the replacement of these with illiteracies of the 'pedal/peddle' type."

He writes: "I am concerned about what seems to me to be the creeping deliquescence of literary English by way of illiterate *confusion of near homophones. The Guardian is by no means the only culprit; the decay of the profession of publisher's reader (and, I must suppose, of that of newspaper proof-reader) has given rise to an epidemic of such howlers throughout the world of books and journals as well as that of *newspapers (though, interestingly, the Guardian's sister paper the Observer is almost free of them)."

A homophone, by the way, is a word pronounced the same as another but differing in meaning. Mr Nixon has logged several hundred of these, with misspellings of a similar ilk, complete with date and page references. He will be keeping up the good work in the New Year.

Here, without the references, is a selection of Benedict Nixon's Guardian Howlers for 1997 (correct intended versions in brackets):

Vexacious (vexatious); rits (writs); it's (its); canons (cannon); wimperingly (whimperingly); prophesy (prophecy); wrecklessly (recklessly); hoards (hordes); councillor (counsellor); principle (principal); loathe (loath/loth); grizzly (grisly); Air Chief Marshall (marshal); back-peddling (pedalling); forward (foreword).

Complimentary (complementary); omniverous (omnivorous); stethescope (stethoscope); cannister (canister); jelley (jelly); mitigate (militate); bevvy (bevy); prophesy [noun] (prophecy); habeus corpus (habeas); pummell (pummel); endebtedness (indebtedness); installment (instalment).

Ringing wet (wringing wet); marvelous (marvellous); collossus (colossus); pouring over (poring); hampster (hamster); curb crawler (kerb); who's (whose); weasly (weaselly); *hoved* (heaved); *libelous* (libellous); pillow torque (talk); *floatation* (flotation); scull (skull).

Phew!

To keep a sense of proportion, this is part of a collection from a whole year. Does the Guardian make more mistakes than its rivals? Does the volume of corrections suggest a decline in standards, or is it a product of the increased size of the paper? Does the number of errors have anything to do with the idea that the sense of a report is more important than the language in which it is conveyed?

I'll let you know when I have the answer to any of these questions.

Finally, thanks to the veteran cartoonist Bill Sykes, for the cartoon reproduced here (with the masthead of the paper appropriately altered) which made its first appearance in 1953. Something made him think you would enjoy it.

'Yes, here it is, Erica! I knew I'd make the ——s apologise!'

It is the policy of the Guardian to correct errors as soon as possible. Readers may contact the office of the Readers' Editor, Ian Mayes, by telephoning 0171 239 9589 between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Fax: 0171 239 9897. E-mail: reader@guardian.co.uk

THEME OF THE YEAR EMOTIONS

Perhaps it all started, this 1997 onset of plasticity in the national upper lip, with The English Patient, a film about the English and the uncomfortable business of emotions, which left large numbers of people profoundly affected, to the point of weeping openly.

Some people thought the film's emotional reception was in itself evidence of the nation's confusion over emotion. What seemed to half the cinema-going public to be intensely profound was to the other half a cold, snobbish, superficial affair, or what Dr Jonathan Miller memorably described as "perfumed piffle".

But the film heralded a distinctly new atmosphere in which no event seemed able to take place without a public [illegible] being shed, or at least, without an un-British display of feelings. [illegible] National elation at Tony Blair's election victory on May 1 [illegible] of events, yet [illegible] It was an occasion for even people who hadn't voted Labour to feel an unexpected lump in the throat and a [illegible] of excitement.

In no time, it seemed, we were watching Princess Diana comforting a distraught Elton John at Versace's memorial service. For the press and public it was photo opportunity [illegible] had no need to [illegible] with ordinary people. [illegible] Elton a couple of months later in Westminster Abbey.

The emotional response to Diana's death was unlike anything seen before, and will probably never be repeated.

[illegible]

HAVE YOU BEEN PAYING ATTENTION

QUIZ OF THE YEAR

1 Which of the following is the odd one out and why?
a) Jerry Hayes
b) Piers Merchant
c) Robin Cook
d) Neil Hamilton

2 Which Hollywood cop helped arrest Neil Hamilton's political career?
a) Starsky c) Kojak
b) Hutch d) Columbo

3 Whose career burgeoned with the phrase "Class behind Glass".

4 "If we blow this opportunity, we blow our place in history. It's as simple as that." Who said it?

5 What wasn't so much Five Alive as nice if you can get it?

6 "Speaking as the daughter of a famous Scouse git." Who was?

7 Whose reign ended in rain on Monday, June 30?

8 Swampy the eco-warrior became an unlikely celebrity this year. What was his real name?

9 Who enjoyed a double Scotch?

10 What happened at 12.02pm on September 6?

11 What is the MaCaughey Seven?
a) An all-American singing family
b) IRA cell
c) new western film
d) septuplets

12 What turned this man's world upside down?

13 Which Dolly donated a jumper to charity?
a) Draper
b) Parton
c) Barbie
d) the cloned sheep

14 Whose year was marked by extremes of joy and woe?

15 What is the Teletubbies' catch-phrase?
a) Hey-ho
b) Eh-oh
c) Oh-no
d) Oh-'eck

Gabrielle Morris

Answers below Theme of the Week.

Quiz answers

1) Neil Hamilton. The others were all alleged to have had — or had — much publicised affairs.
2) b — Hutch. Actor David Soul helped his old friend Martin Bell to success in Tatton.
3) Swindon's Melinda Messenger, whose first modelling job was posing for a double-glazing firm.
4) Tony Blair, talking to his troops a month before the general election.
5) The launch of Channel Five on March 30. Despite much hype, it was only available in 60 per cent of households.
6) Cherie Blair, receiving her honorary degree in Liverpool.
7) The British Empire's reign over Hong Kong ended with a monsoon which nearly washed out the handing over ceremony.
8) Daniel Hooper.
9) Scottish people, who voted for their own parliament and tax varying powers in the devolution referendum.
10) The country stopped for a minute's silence as the coffin of Diana, Princess of Wales reached the Great West Door of Westminster Abbey.
11) The septuplets born to the MaCaughey family in Des Moines, Iowa.
12) Lone sailor Tony Bullimore survived five days in his capsized yacht, Exide Challenger.
13) A fleece was shorn from Dolly the cloned sheep, and is to be spun into a jumper to raise money for cystic fibrosis.
14) The Queen, who talked in her Christmas speech of the sorrow of Diana's death and joy of her golden wedding anniversary.
15) b — Eh-oh.

How You Rate?
0-4 Uh Uh
5-9 So So
9-14 Mmm
15 Wey Hey

AWARDS OF THE YEAR

Loser of The Year:
"So right. OK. We lost." John Major on his election defeat.

Inadequate of The Year:
"My cock is small, is small." Mohamed Al Fayed revealing his shortcomings in a tape played in Parliament by Neil Hamilton.

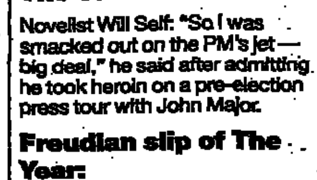
Satirist of The Year:
Nelson Mandela, who on meeting the Spice Girls declared "this is one of the greatest moments of my life."

Goose of The Year:
Lorna Fitzsimons, MP for Rochdale, who was daft enough to tell a reporter from the News of the World she was "an immensely sexual person" who often looks at male MPs and thinks "cor, I wouldn't mind giving him one!"

Househusband of The Year:
Sir terence Conran, for this tribute to his ex wife Caroline, who soaked him for a £10 million divorce settlement: "The figure is unbelievable. Just because she cooked a few meals now and again."

Political reporter of The Year:
Novelist Will Self: "So I was smacked out on the PM's jet — big deal," he said after admitting he took heroin on a pre-election press tour with John Major.

Freudian slip of The Year:
Frank McGettigan, general manager of Channel 4, who introduced Culture Secretary Chris Smith to the floor as "the *Secretary of Straight for Media*".



Sport of The Year:
Mike Tyson for biting a chunk out of Heavyweight Boxing Champion Evander Holyfield's ear during their world title bout.

Narcissist of The Year:
Ann Widdecombe: "I don't wish to set myself up as a role model for girls, but I do think the fact I am short and fat and ugly is very helpful for women."

Art Critic of The Year:

Tracey Emin, who arrived drunk and incoherent for a televised discussion of the Turner Prize awards. She complained she couldn't understand a word anyone said — and left noisily whining that she wanted her mum.

Gabrielle Morris

Jael

ILLUSTRATION BY CHRISTOPHER SHARROCK

◄ page 13 at all in Wendy's class as an academic high-flyer. Rachel had deep-set brown eyes, and straight black plaits, and long fine hands, and an indefinable sexiness, nothing to do with puberty.

It was Wendy who had the beginnings of breasts. Rachel was thin and wiry. Wendy was going to pass the eleven-plus into the senior school with no problem, whereas Rachel's future was uncertain, and she showed a mild sulky rebelliousness to the teachers. I should think Rachel's gang was about a third the size of Wendy's. The girls in it were naughtier, less conformist. In context, you must understand, of our all being totally respectable nice girls.

Wendy's gang, at playtime, sat around on the low stone wall round the netball courts and Rachel's gang met in the bushes, in the sooty Victorian laurel-bushes near the gate into the school grounds.

I think, looking back, that Rachel had leadership qualities, and that Wendy didn't — she was simply too agreeable, her gang clustered round her because she was a star whose star quality was a perfect normality. Looking back, I think you could call it grace. She did things — things she was asked to do, things she was expected to do, things she mildly liked to do — as well as she could, and was briefly surprised to find that no one else could do them anywhere near as well. Whereas Rachel was moody. You had to be on the right side of her, or she picked on you. No, I can't remember any instance of her picking on anyone, nothing so precise. Just an atmosphere, a smoke, of possible danger.

There was a fringe of girls, like myself, who hung around the edges of the gangs, not sure if we were *admitted* as members, or not. Because we weren't sure, we were also uncertain what the gangs *did*. What was being discussed, in secret whispers, in smuggled notes in Scripture lessons in the bogs. We thought, if we could be in the inner circle — both gangs had an inner circle of about four or five acolytes and the Leader — we would be part of something that was going on, we would be less bored.

I know now, I know the secret of what was going on. It was nothing at all. Or at least, all that was going on was the self-perpetuating of the structure of the gangs, the inner circles, the outer circles, the tension between Wendy's gang in the sun and Rachel's in the shade.

We were in the green suburb of an industrial town, and when we crossed the town on winter afternoons to go home to tea, we saw *real* gangs, that is active gangs, boys with bicycle chains, boys with knives and heavy boots, boys whose doings were reported in the papers, sometimes. We hurried past, looking unfrightened, walking together, safety in numbers. But our gangs were not *gangs*. Nothing ever happened.

Or at least, I think nothing happened. No, change that, *something* happened, but I do not remember how.

I had the idea, because I read so many books, that treachery would make the gangs interesting. A girl could betray the secrets of one gang to the other, if she could find any secrets to betray. I think I was interested in treachery because of the chart of Rupert of Hentzau. I hadn't yet met that other charmer, Edmund in King Lear, I'm fairly sure. I may have hit on some narrative universal; what is interesting about boring gangs had to be treachery. It was a silly idea, because, as I said, there were no secrets, no plans of battle, no battles, nothing to betray. I watch Lara betraying me with all the inventiveness of her, our, fraught and hyperactive trade, and look back on the innocent child I was, with my dreams of drama, with a sad pity.

Our world is full of a buzz about surveys which have been commissioned which show that *one boring commercial* can lose the audience for the whole commercial break round it, can even diminish the audience for the television programme into which our break breaks. She is putting it about, in whispers, that another soft drinks firm has done a survey that shows that both Spanaranja and my Grenadine films are infecting whole slots with boredom and apathy.

I think, myself, she invented not only the findings, but the survey. It was, I have to admit, a resourceful idea, which will leave a question hanging like smoke in the atmosphere, even if I manage to annihilate the survey or demolish its hypothesised findings. *She's quick*, and she's brave. She lives in a world of interactive computer-generated gladiators, bomb-lobbers, kamikaze scantily-clad dolls, headsmen with swords and laser-duelists my reactions aren't quick enough for. She can fill screens with blood I shall drown in, at the touch of her glossy black fingernails.

I did have *another* idea, *I think*, about Wendy and Rachel. I thought, if some girl stretched a dark cord across the path, in the cross-country run, she could bring down Wendy in her pride as she strode past, leaving the way clear for Rachel, who would be impressed and grateful. It would be a *real* secret, something would really have happened, that could never be told. It would be real treachery, not just giggling and whispering. Rachel *would be able* to recognise the degree of difference, between talk and something really happening, for once.

I didn't have this idea, particularly, because I was in love with Rachel and hated Wendy. Or the other way round, because I was in love with Wendy, and she spurned me for her inner circle. She never *exactly spurned anyone* — her inner circle got there through the greater persistence of their greater desire. I don't think I was in love with either of them, or with anyone, except Sir Lancelot, and Rupert, and Saladin, and Mr Rochester. I was afraid of being annihilated by boredom, of there never being anything else.

Once I thought about talking to Rachel about my idea about the cord, of course, I saw how impossible the idea was. She wouldn't have listened, and might have reacted quite nastily, or been put off, or even scared. The scenario of her secret gratitude was just that — a tenuous scenario, and I abandoned it. I was sorry, because I knew where the good place to stretch the cord would be, between the trees in a copse on the climb round the rough scree near the old quarry. There was cover for the traitor to retrieve the cord, and get away, in the confusion. The traitor would be dressed for the race, but would have skipped a large part of the circuit, cutting straight through the trees.

The thing that happened was, that Wendy, running easily, and well ahead of everyone else, did stumble and fall, in exactly that place. She fell quite a way, down the scree, and hit her head very nastily on a sharp stone, and broke a vertebra and a rib and was in hospital for quite a long time. She was unconscious for quite a long time, too, and when she did come round was, to use a cliché which is conveniently to hand, "never the same again". A light went out. She took the eleven-plus with the rest of us, and didn't pass. Neither did Rachel, or not to our very superior school, and after a time I heard no more of either of them. I don't know what became of Wendy after the Secondary Modern.

I have a very clear memory of the piece of cord — sort of fairly thick garden twine, such as my father had in his shed, a dark khaki-green twine, completely invisible over dead leaves and puddles. I have the opposite of Alzheimer's, I remember things I really think didn't happen. After all, my job is scenarios, is *finding* props, is imagining lighting, the figure entering the frame, and ACTION.

I remember Jael because the story doesn't quite make sense, the emotions are all in a muddle, you are asked to rejoice in wickedness. I remember Jael because of the delicious red, because of the edge of excitement in wielding the pen*cil-point*, because I had a half-a-glimpse of making art and colour.

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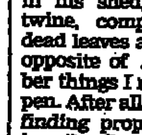

Antonia Byatt won the Booker prize in 1990 with Possession. Her latest novel, Babel Tower, was published last year

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97 things to eliminate in '98

by Charles Nevin

Right. It's that time, isn't it? Time to look back, to reflect, to ponder and to arrive at unhurried, sober, mature judgments and conclusions about what has passed; time, too, to look forward, to plan, and to dare hope that the coming year might be just a tiny bit better, happier and, yes, kinder than the last.

And so it is that, each year, I like to offer my own small contribution to the process by listing what we have had in the past year that we could do without in the next. Furthermore, to concentrate minds possibly a little befuddled by the season, and, let's face it, as a bit of a gimmick, I make clever use of the changing numbers in the year. Which means that today I shall be proposing 97 People, Phrases and Phenomena Not Wanted In '98. Snappy, eh?

Before we start, just a couple of quick points. Do these proscriptions, you will be wanting to know, have the slightest effect? To which I reply: Hugh Grant. Martin Amis: off to New York. Norman Stone: off to Turkey. Those 3D thingie puzzles. Buzz Lightyear. Thank you.

On the other hand, I will concede that both Humphrey the Cat and Tony Blair just about contrived to keep themselves in the public eye, and that William Hague has done far more to finish off the baseball cap than I have ever managed. Next point: some candidates are too obvious to mention, *and you know which they are*. Now let's get on with it. Let's have an end to:

1 Outpourings of public grief. Enough. Elton says so. Please mourn quietly at home from now on.

2 The expression "She would have wanted it".

3 Bullying of the royal family. It only encourages them, viz:

4 The Prince of Wales posing in that suit with that wary smile with those various giants of light entertainment (top right). Next: walk-on in Queen Vic with distant relation, Barbara Windsor. Actually, that might be quite fun.

5 Britannia (below, right). How many times do we have to say goodbye to it? Putting it on the Manchester Ship Canal does seem rather a poor joke, though.

6 Handovers. I got a bit bored with that, frankly. Why can't we have some handing back? India would be marvellous.

7 Spice Girls: I don't think I could stand another article saying they're finished. Please, just let the girls get on with what they do so wonderfully, wonderfully well.

8 Letters from Alastair Campbell. Leave it out, Al. We say: your time would be better spent pondering the plight of single mothers and the disabled. And, while you're at it, stop writing all these:

9 Articles by Tony Blair that keep appearing everywhere. Nobody reads them, you know. Why not try some other areas of fiction? The erotic stuff sells well, I'm told.

10 People who go around doing bits from The Fast Show (below). There are even people who go around boring people senseless doing the bit from The Fast Show where the guy bores people senseless doing bits from The Fast Show.

11 Swampy. Very '97. We've got John Prescott now.

12 The dread phrase "in the first of a three-part series". The dread phrase "the dread phrase".

13 Being "mired in sleaze".

14 Apologies. Why is everybody so sorry all the time? Does God apologise?

15 Whatever is supposed to be the new black.

16 The phrase "is the new black."

17 Kirsty Young (right). Trevor McDonald would never get away with that fringe, you know.

18 Outpourings of celebrity grief for dress designers. Please increase your security, even if you're only popping out for a paper, or we'll have to go through all that again.

19 Tracey Emin. Very good year, but I think that's probably enough now, don't you?

20 People talking about how wonderful the Full Monty is.

21 People talking about how The Full Monty has saved the British Film Industry.

22 People talking about how the British Film Industry still needs saving.

23 People talking about the derivation of the phrase "The full monty".

24 It wasn't that good a film, anyway, was it?

25 Jokes employing the ff in Fflon. She doesn't find them ffunny.

26 Martin Amis. I know he's going, but a mention is traditional. And now he's *writing* about the bloody teeth.

27 All these historians who insist on talking about the past in the wrong tense: "Henry is now a man of 33, etc", "So, Caesar has now got three choices".

28 All these soccer players, managers and commentators who insist on talking about the past in the wrong tense: "So he's got three men to beat, and then he gets in this lovely little cross".

29 Another interview with Sir Paul McCartney. Concentrate on writing another cracker like Mull of Kintyre, Macca.

30 The expression "his squeeze".

31 People campaigning to be Mayor of London. I've really lost interest since Jeff Bernard died. And Arthur Mullard.

32 People wondering why they don't put Richard Branson in charge of everything.

33 Did you see what happened to that balloon?

34 Has anyone seen a train on the West Coast line recently?

35 Record breakers, particularly:

36 Thrust whatever number it was. I mean, come on, really. Get yourselves a Hornby Double O, lads. Or some decent sex.

37 Mir.

38 Dolly the Sheep. If God had meant a sheep to be cloned, he wouldn't have made so many of them, now would He? Next I suppose they'll be cloning rabbits.

39 People who say "size isn't important", or "size is important" in a knowing way, as if they're at the cutting edge of sophisticated comic invention.

40 The expression "the cutting edge". And, while we're here, as we say every year, "agenda", "fast track", "he knows where the bodies are buried", "he's not someone to go tiger shooting with", "the dog that didn't bark", "Live fast, die young, etc", quoting from Orwell, and "not suffering fools gladly". Who does, for goodness sake?

41 And now we've finally exhausted the New Labour, New X formulation, everyone's moved on to the People's this and the People's that. Leave it out.

42 New York-style loft living. In Wandsworth?

43 Health scares and government bans. Let's live on the edge a little, shall we?

44 The phrase "I like living on the edge", used in an ironic way.

45 What about dropping irony altogether for a bit?

46 Perhaps not, we'd have nothing left to write about.

47 Vic and Bob would have to get a day job.

48 Still, we might see a little less of Ulrika.

49 But we'd have to say what we meant. Scary.

50 The expression "scary".

51 And the expression "day job".

52 Endlessly conflicting medical reports. Allow me to offer an example: University of California finding: smelling coffee can protect you from heart disease. University of Bergen finding: drinking coffee can give you heart disease. Institute for Interdisciplinary Research, Brussels, finding: drinking coffee (right) makes you lose your temper. Frankly, I'm not surprised.

53 Actually, "actually" and "frankly" are getting a bit overworked, aren't they?

54 Speed Garage. Whatever happened to good old Handbag House?

55 These enormous restaurants. Why should we put money into Terence Conran's pockets when it's only going to go to his ex-wife who contributed absolutely nothing to his success?

56 Restaurants. What's wrong with the little woman rustling something up as usual?

57 The Prodigy. Did you know one of them still has his mum round to do the ironing? Almost enough, almost, to convert you to that more sensitive phenomenon:

58 Laddishness, soft or hard. Very wearing after a bit, I find, particularly that programme about sport on the television where they smirk.

59 Another new social grouping discovered by some magazine or other desperately in need of a cover story because the one planned has just fallen down. The Bridget-Jones's? Forget it, that was at least two groups ago.

60 And, worst of all, a new one is automatically guaranteed a slot on one of those dire discussion slots on the Today programme featuring a desperately game John or Sue, Peter York and some squeaky youth. Where are you, Jack de Manio?

61 City Bonuses. How much do you need to get pissed on Friday night?

62 Some of these journalists seem to get quite a lot, too. How much do you need to read a good book or go to a concert?

63 Tony Blair's new haircut. I didn't like the last one, but this is uncannily like the one on the guy who died on Dallas and then came back, Bobby. Grow it out, Tony. Cherie's got a good hairdresser.

64 The way they knock Cherie because she turns herself out well.

65 The way they knock Cherie because she earns all this money. Some of them even have the nerve to suggest that she gets work just because she's the Prime Minister's wife.

66 You're all right with me, Derry. Very tasteful job on your Lords digs. Lovely wallpaper. Is it washable? You must have been watching:

67 These endless programmes about home improvements on the telly, and particularly the one where one family redecorates for another family and they come back and weep when they open their eyes and see the orange walls and the mobile made from yoghurt cups. (This is a joke, really, because now I come to think of it, that programme is made by part of the Guardian Media Group).

68 Cool Britannia. Do me a favour. Oxford Street. Noel Edmonds. Antiques Road Show. Julian Clary.

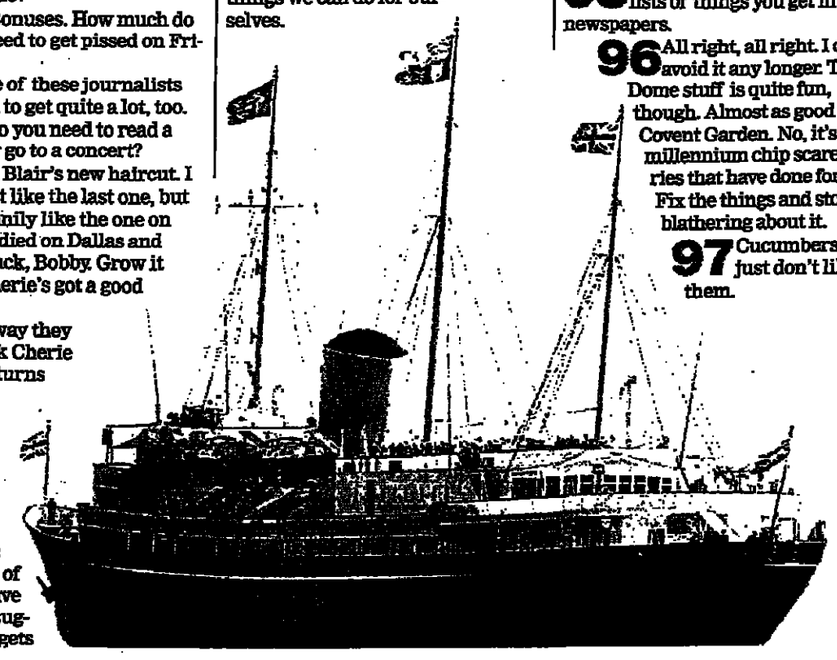
69 Another documentary going behind the scenes of some job or institution or other in which everybody pretends that it is all spontaneous and the cameras aren't there.

70 Unless, of course, it's set in Liverpool, in which case everybody pretends they're auditioning for a key role in Hi De Hi.

71 Another documentary pretending to be a sympathetic examination of eccentrics while poking fun at them.

72 Eccentrics. So many. And are they supposed to know they're eccentric?

73 Women feeling sorry for men. That's one of the few things we can do for ourselves.



74 Famous people posing with their dummy at Madame Tussaud's. William Hague was worrying.

75 No, we have got to keep Madame Tussaud's. The streets of London would be completely blocked by Scandinavians if they hadn't got it to go to.

76 The expression "You wish". Or "I wish".

77 Angry farmers. The real victims of the dependency culture. Don't give them money, they'll only go out and spend it on organophosphates. They need help, counselling. Send that nice George Monbiot round.

78 Angry French lorry drivers. Shoot them.

79 The use of "confides", as in: " 'bla bla bla,' so and so confided". And "quips", a word calculated to kill dead the remark it follows, as in " 'Bla bla bla,' he quipped."

80 The use of the words "Picture this" to begin a newspaper or magazine article.

81 Serialisations of books claiming that the Maya were spacemen who predicted the end of the world and Margaret Thatcher in between writing the Bible in code, founding freemasonry, ruling Egypt, poisoning Mozart, and burying this treasure they stole from Mary Magdalene in a small village in south west France.

82 Offshore trusts. Suddenly very unfashionable. I prefer to invest my money in Formula One Grand Prix motor racing.

83 London Fashion Week. And, as they said at the Glasgow Empire when Mike Winters arrived on stage to join Bernie, "My God, there's two of them!".

84 Bill Clinton's penis. We've run out of angles. Put it away, there's a dear.

85 Wheelie Bins. How many more pensioners must be trapped?

86 Stories about unlikely people setting up Internet sites, like the Pope; and finding the dots in e-mail addresses intrinsically amusing.

87 Calling all harmless obsessives "anoraks". This is a beautiful and useful word which will soon be lost to us, if we're not careful, like "gay". Remember that one?

88 Celebrity travellers. And that means you, Palin, north London.

89 Celebrities who still complain that we don't appreciate success in this country and how it's so different in America. So travel there.

90 Might be a good place for you, too, Neil and Christine, Tatton. And you, Jonathan, SW1. Fresh start, can do, and all that. Bye, now.

91 Coriander. Fresh herbs, please.

92 Aftershave in lifts.

93 Feng Shui. If it's so good, how come so many Chinese restaurants are takeaway?

94 People banging on about whether Seinfeld is better than Sanders in between an exhaustive run down of last night's ER and comparisons of middle and late Bochco.

95 These endless clever-dick lists of things you get in the newspapers.

96 All right, all right. I can't avoid it any longer. The Dome stuff is quite fun, though. Almost as good as Covent Garden. No, it's the millennium chip scare stories that have done for me. Fix the things and stop blathering about it.

97 Cucumbers. I just don't like them.

arts

So the turkey tasted of fish and the presents stank. Big deal. On TV, you don't get through Christmas without bruises or a broken heart. **Nancy Banks-Smith** watched the suffering

The agony and the ecstasy

"Thousands of homes are without power." And aren't they the lucky ones?

The punishment for bigamy is not, as is commonly supposed, two mothers-in-law but two turkeys. In *Coronation Street* (ITV) John, who is giving tie salesmen a sadly flighty image, has toyed with Deirdre's finer feelings for months, though he has a wife, children and a turkey in the oven elsewhere.

(Every time Deirdre has one of her emotional convulsions I learn how to spell her name again and, once the waves have subsided, I forget.)

Not only did the wretched man have to force down two helpings of everything on Christmas day, but his ear was comprehensively chewed by both women as he ricocheted between them. As we are all asking ourselves today, was it *worth* it?

Once upon a time, if you wanted Christmas snow on TV, you used Lux flakes. Now we have Christmas soaps.

In *EastEnders* (BBC1) Grant, not heeding or perhaps understanding his brother's grunts, ("Tell 'er ar i' is but don' go overboard") kicked down the bedroom door and gave Tiffany a little black eye to match her little back dress. Meanwhile, Aunt Sal was phoning her straying husband, 'Arold: "Cockroaches 'ave more going for them than wot you 'ave!" and Pat was stoutly repelling bailiffs: "Shut up or I'll punch your lights out!"

Roy, you will be pleased to hear, is holding his own in hospital. Much the safest place to be.

In *Emmerdale* (ITV) Jan, whose son was burned alive last Christmas, went off her head and kidnapped the child always referred to as Baby James. Whatever Happened To Baby James kept the cast usefully occupied for a week, searching Yorkshire.

Brookside (Channel 4) had a Crimbo special about people whose names end in the sound -ee. Barry used our Lindsey to blackmail Jimmy into a Crimbo crime but he was saved by the sight of a picture of Jackie and little Billy. Powerful, if local, dialogue: "You must be off your cake!"

It is feared that Jacqui Dixon's attempts at artificial insemination with a turkey-baster have seriously affected poultry sales.

Talking turkey, no bird seemed safe on TV this year. Les ran over his bird, producing instant turkey sandwich. Tony sat on his mother's Christmas budgie and, in *Two Fat Ladies* (BBC2) Clarissa casually produced a seasonal anecdote to chill the blood. Her father ("who fought this single-handed battle against us enjoying Christmas") kept the family budgie in formaldehyde for three months so he could bury it on Christmas Day.

Scarred, one fears, by this childhood trauma, she produced a Christmas dinner for choirboys of such alcoholic and laxative content ("Here are the port and prunes!") that one feared for their Silent Night.

There are no big Christmas spectaculars on TV any more. There was even a programme, *Cardigans At Christmas* (BBC2), explaining why not. Your nostalgia for the big blockbusters in which, as Jenny Eclair said, everybody seemed to be having a much better time than you, evaporated fast when you saw them again.

Black and White Minstrels throwing cotton-wool snowballs, ice-skating monkeys and Demis Roussos festooned with fairy lights? Only *Morecambe and Wise* survived the exposure.

As the perceptive Jenny Eclair said, "We have become a nation of sneerers; I'm a bit of a sneerer myself. It really is far too uncool to be seen to have a good time." And, of course, it costs.

> It's feared that Jacqui Dixon's antics with a turkey-baster have seriously affected poultry sales

This was beautifully illustrated in *Men Behaving Badly* (BBC1), where a ho-ho Christmas was intercut with four bodies comatose on a sofa ("It's a bit like sex, Christmas. The anticipation and then nothing for another 364 days.")

ITV pushed the boat out with *Black Velvet Band*, a vehicle for Nick Berry, whom, after Heartbeat, they treasure. A gang of Victorian thieves, mostly recruited from EastEnders, are caught trying to steal the Crown Jewels, deported to Tasmania ("I examined a man there once. He'd gone mad") and jump ship in South Africa. Nick Berry's first line — "You must be kidding!" — suggests it will not slavishly historical.

Activity incessant. Vistas galore. The scene-stealer was South Africa. Great gulping spaces swallowed the cast, though Amy Marston, whippet-thin, and Stephen Marcus, huge like Hoss from the Ponderosa, left their mark.

Dame Edna Kisses It Better (ITV), coming from St Edna's Caring Clinic for the Stars in Harley Street, was a send-up of the star-and-a-few-friends spectacular. (Edna to Rolf Harris:

Nil by brain

This was **Derek Malcolm**'s last year as Guardian film critic. Hollywood could have given him a better send-off

Me: "Am I losing touch, or is Hollywood churning out dross as never before?"
Jack Nicholson: "No, you are not losing touch. It is! And, what's worse, they know it."

That interview took place nearly a year ago, but 1997 has only emphasised the point. There have been fewer and fewer films from the headquarters of film-making that can be recommended to even slightly discerning viewers. In March, the Oscars confirmed it. The voters — many of them film-makers of better, bygone days, but also those responsible for the mediocre fare — went almost wholesale for independently-made films.

But there's a silver lining to every cloud. The absence of strong Hollywood product gave quite a boost to British movie-making. If you put the dozen strongest Hollywood movies against a similar number of the best of the Brits, you'd find that most of the more intelligent were British. That's a real turn-up for the book, even though the Americans would win handsomely when it came to spectacle and popular appeal.

Which is why Hollywood goes on making expensive dross. If you can make $100 million in your own country, and a further huge lump abroad, why risk more ambitious stuff like The English Patient? People seem to forget that it was a high-risk project, as were Shine, Fargo and Slingblade, the other Oscar-winners.

I'm not too worried about the future, though. There are films coming up — mostly, but not all, from Hollywood — that are likely to carry more weight than all but a few we've seen in Britain over the past year or so, like Paul Thomas Anderson's Boogie Nights, Ang Lee's The Ice Storm, Gillian Armstrong's *Oscar And Lucinda*, Gus Van Sant's Good Will Hunting, Jim Sheridan's The Boxer, Spielberg's Amistad, Eastwood's Midnight In The Garden Of Good And Evil, Neil Jordan's Butcher's Boy and Tarantino's Jackie Brown.

Add Altman's Gingerbread Man, Alan Rudolph's Afterglow and Paul Schrader's Affliction to the list, and you can see that the official American cinema hasn't died of populism but was only sleeping.

If you look at the world's top 10 box-office attractions, however, you have to admit that most film-goers prefer to be entertained by hi-tech fluency or facile story-telling than by anything more cerebral. The list, in order, is: The Lost World, Men In Black, Liar Liar, Star Wars: Special Edition, The Fifth Element, Air Force One, Batman And Robin, Con Air, Face/Off and My Best Friend's Wedding. Of those, only Face/Off would even be considered for inclusion in my best 10, and one or two others might make the worst 10.

The obvious candidate for best Hollywood movie of the year is Curtis Hanson's LA Confidential — very well scripted and acted, and directed with great care to reconstruct the book's tone. I'm in two minds about Face/Off. I applaud John Woo's style and energy, but find the coruscating action sequences too long and too many. Still, it's light years ahead of Air Force One and suchlike. The American films I liked most were not orthodox Hollywood — Swingers, Big Night, Grosse Pointe Blank, Bound, Welcome To The Dollhouse, Lost Highway, Everyone Says I Love You, Private Parts, Looking For Richard, Normal Life, When We Were Kings and our own Mike Newell's Donnie Brasco.

This is a very decent list, but the dross kept coming — some of it, like Batman And Robin, successful beyond any intelligent person's imaginings. I've a feeling this helped Peter Cattaneo's hugely successful The Full Monty, a film you can't help liking but hardly among the comedy greats.

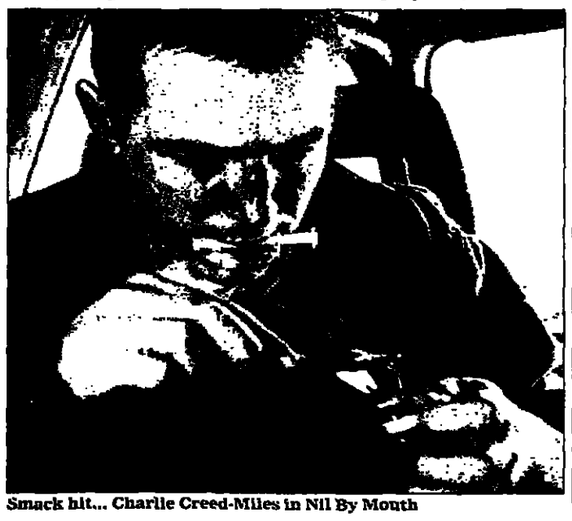
I'm really glad it tops the charts in Britain for the year, beating The Lost World (pretty awful) and Men In Black (entertaining but overpraised). One of the reasons for its success was that it was financed by the US and given a whole-hearted American-type multiplex release. If only Mike Leigh or Ken Loach got such favours. Loach's highly entertaining Riff-Raff and Raining Stones, and Mike Leigh's Secrets And Lies were all capable of reaching wider audiences than they did.

But then, do we really want the Americans to take most of the profits our films make? The other phenomenon was Mel Smith's Bean, which did less well than The Full Monty in the UK but even better round the world. We shouldn't be too mean about it. We need commercial movies, as well as those like Nil By Mouth, Career Girls, Hamlet, Mrs Brown, Regeneration, Welcome To Sarajevo and Under The Skin, which make the British cinema one of the most intriguing just now.

My own favourite is Gary Oldman's Nil By Mouth — a bit long, a little lacking in structure but immensely powerful, superbly acted and as memorable a first film as any in years. Kathy Burke won the Cannes actress accolade for it, and deservedly. But if Ray Winstone doesn't get something soon, justice will not have been served.

There were some successes from elsewhere, mostly French like *A Self-Made Hero*, *l'Appartement*, *La Vie En Rose* and Ridicule. The Czech Oscar-winner Kolya, Antonioni's Beyond The Clouds, Kaurismaki's Drifting Clouds, the Indian The Square Circle, the Mexican Deep Crimson, Spain's Tierra, the French Will It Snow For Christmas?, Kiarostami's Close-Up and Chen Kaige's Temptress Moon also came our way.

My 10 favourites would be LA Confidential (US), A Self-Made Hero (France), Nil By Mouth (UK), Shine (Australia), Deep Crimson (Mexico), Idiot Box (Australia), Big Night (US), Evita (US), When We Were Kings (US) and Close-Up (Iran).



Smack hit... Charlie Creed-Miles in Nil By Mouth

What's the secret?... above, Kim Basinger confounds the sceptics in LA Confidential

Meanwhile, new boy **Richard Williams** thinks he's on to a good thing

And I get paid to do this?

The ever-lengthening credits for special-effects technicians and the premium on new and more horrible kinds of killer bugs notwithstanding, cinema is still about telling stories. And whatever praise may be due to Brian Helgeland and Curtis Hanson for their reconstruction of James Ellroy's LA Confidential, or to Gary Oldman for summoning scenes of such ferocious realism in Nil By Mouth, the screenwriter of the year was undoubtedly William Shakespeare. Al Pacino's *Looking For Richard* and Baz Luhrmann's Romeo And Juliet, two films of exceptional merit, proved that the more you dare to mess around with the Bard, and the more interest you show in confronting his shade with the realities of our culture, the stronger he gets.

Looking For Richard was my film of the year because it sent me out of the cinema fizzing with the conviction that I'd just seen someone use the medium in an entirely original way. Pacino's obsession with Richard III led him to film the play in several different styles, cross-cutting the results and juxtaposing them with the views of thesps and academics, not all of whom were to be taken entirely seriously.

Luhrmann brought the greatest teenage love story of all time into the consciousness of its most appropriate audience with a treatment full of Uzis and dreadlocks, setting the lines against the swoon and clatter of contemporary pop and earning the poster a place on thousands of bedroom walls.

The first half of the year also brought Pacino and Johnny Depp in Donnie Brasco, a late-blooming genre piece; Ted Demme's *Beautiful Girls*, with the year's funniest moment (a mass karaoke version of Neil Diamond's Sweet Caroline); Doug Liman's Swingers, including a marvellous answering-machine gag; Martine Dugowson's coolly ambitious Portraits Chinois, incorporating the first of Helena Bonham Carter's two remarkable performances; David Lynch's thrillingly impenetrable Lost Highway; and John Cusack in the charming Grosse Point Blank. And all that before I became a film critic.

Once installed in the seat vacated by a doyen, I began to worry that the volume of rubbish might soon dull the basic enthusiasm for the idea of going to the movies. It didn't take long to realise that although the critics who complain about the level of dross are usually those with the cinema's best interests at heart, even they seldom lose interest altogether, and keep coming back.

It was interesting to see the way LA Confidential cheered up so many professional observers by reminding them that it was still possible to go and see a new film crafted with old values, thanks to Curtis Hanson's willingness to respect his audience. Kevin Spacey's slow, private smile was a thing of wonder, anointing him as this year's Harvey Keitel (although the forthcoming Midnight In The Garden Of Good And Evil suggests that, like Keitel, his range and his instincts may be somewhat more limited than the present level of adulation suggests).

Four first-time directors presented films that we'll still be watching in 20 years' time. Nil By Mouth was a genuine tour de force, even more impressive at a second viewing, when Oldman's control of his material became unmistakable. Another movie repaying several visits was l'Appartement, which brought Gilles Mimouni the accolade of the continental arthouse hit of the year, gave Vincent Cassel a role to follow his skinhead in La Haine, and widened Romane Bohringer's circle of admirers.

Carine Adler's Under The Skin and Sandrine Veysset's Will It Snow For Christmas? deserved all their accolades and more for a shared willingness to confront difficult narratives, and for the clarity of their directors' vision.

The intensity of Samantha Morton's portrayal of the grieving girl in Under The Skin makes her my actress of the year, just ahead of Mike Leigh's pair of Career Girls, Lynda Steadman and Katrin Cartlidge. The equivalent award for male actors goes to Philip Baker Hall, whose lizard-eyed stillness as the tired old gambler in Paul Thomas Anderson's Hard Eight has already, unbelievably, slipped off the big screen, perhaps never to return.

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"We're both Australians. We can't be insulted.")

My personal favourite was *Arena's* Banana (BBC2) which had a twin, Arena's Cigar. The cigar used to be a comedian's favourite prop — because it gave them time to think — but, as Spike Milligan pointed out, the banana actually *is* a comedian. Staggeringly, it turned out that Yes, We Have No Bananas was written by Trotsky's nephew. So I suppose it is a searing critique of capitalism and the American Fruit Company.

One is pleased, if surprised, to learn the Queen is fond of poetry, so I offer a poem of Oscar Wilde's, Requiescat, which she may find appropriate. It turned up in *The Canterville Ghost* (ITV).

"Tread lightly, she is near
Under the snow.
Speak gently, she can hear
The daisies grow.
All her bright golden hair
Tarnished with rust.
She that was young and fair
Fallen to dust."

Forget The Pickwick Papers and The Queen's Speech. The highlight of **Anne Karpf**'s holiday radio was something less traditional

The Plowright stuff

In among last week's anthologies, tinsel and carols, Radio 4 sprinkled something genuinely sparkling — its (continuing) season of the work of *Piers Plowright*. In a medium where most of the "characters" are writers — its directors are more discreet and jobbing — Plowright is the nearest thing to a radio auteur. His work, immediately recognisable, constitutes an oeuvre.

For once, the use of this word isn't just an excuse to sound clever but denotes a body of work that together creates something larger than itself. Indeed, you could say there's a whole school of Plowright, since he's a noted encourager of young producers and has collaborated with countless compilers.

Plowright is now retiring and the Radio 4 celebration began with a feature, An Artist In Sound, presented by the documentarist himself. This is a bit like asking someone to write their own obituary. It did show the serendipitous way he's come upon his subjects — one interesting person has led him to another and then on again — but was also clearly constraining. Though he could describe what he aims for, he couldn't say how brilliantly he usually achieves it, even if some of the clips provided ample demonstration.

A Plowright person is eccentric, richly human and likely to be old. Another rare radio auteur, the fabled maker of radio ballads Charles Parker, hymned dying industries and the collective experience of workers with a kind of elegiac energy. But Plowright's terrain is the individual, and though his people often look back with some sadness, they always exhibit a zestful resilience. At his crammed BBC retirement party earlier in the month, Matthew Bannister rightly called his work transporting.

> Here is a man who treasures ambiguity and metaphor, who relishes the vernacular

As if to prove it, An Artist In Sound included a clip where the widow of poet and translator Arthur Whaley described his death — not only her excruciating sense of loss, but also a moving appreciation of the freeing of his spirit. Plowright's juiciest work to date (he'll continue to produce) is the Prix Italia-winning One Big Kitchen Table, about a day in the life of a Philadelphia delicatessen where every customer is a Woody Allen and, as the owner put it, "everything is heart-attack food" — even as you eat the pastrami "you feel your arteries hardening". One Big Kitchen Table has a typically Plowright optimism and warmth: it's impossible to hear it and feel dejected about life. Sadly, it isn't included in full in this season.

But what distinguishes Plowright's work isn't just its content, but its style. Here is a man who treasures ambiguity and metaphor, who relishes the vernacular and caresses the demotic. Where most documentarists are relentlessly instrumental, excising everything that doesn't advance their story, Plowright adores process, and allows circumlocution and hesitation to do the expressive work for him. In An Artist In Sound he talked about why he didn't use presenters, and spoke of his willingness to risk some confusion in the listener because "you shouldn't tell everything — there must always be secrets".

So far the Radio 4 Plowright season has given us Mr Fletcher, The Poet, about a garrulous Leicestershire poet who simply talked at length about his childhood and life, and Mr B, in which an aged schoolmaster spoke with fervour and tears about teaching small boys, while giving glimpses of private pain. They're not his best work, but they show a producer so trusting of human experience that he makes programmes in which non-celebrities are allowed to talk about themselves without interruption, and listeners can get sucked into someone else's life. The pity of it is that with his careful, labour-intensive approach to documentary-making, he could never be produced by today's BBC.

Best of times, worst of times

What left **Chris Smith** yawning? What was **Tracey Emin**'s second most intoxicating experience? The arts world looks back at '97

Quentin Crisp
Writer, performer
LA Confidential was very good, showing how the corruption of the police goes right to the very top. Face/Off was also a highlight. Actually, John Travolta was a highlight. I hated him when he was that twitching stick-like creature in Saturday Night Fever, but then he went away and hid. We know what he was doing when he was away — eating. And now he's back, twice the man. Low point? I don't see awful films. I avoid them.

Tracey Emin
Artist
How could I ever have survived 1997 without The Teletubbies? My other highlights include David Bowie singing Fame (dedicated to me) live in Dublin and a crazy summer fair organised by artist Gavin Turk and Debora Curtiss, in the style of Joshua Compston, the founder member of Factual Nonsense, a 24-hour binge of total creativity.

Tom Courtenay
Actor
Edward Fox was magnificent in A Letter Of Resignation. It was a marvellous impersonation of Harold Macmillan, and Hugh Whitemore wrote the part so humanly. My low point came when my wife's friend let her down and I had to accompany her to Cinderella. That's as much as I'm prepared to say.

Elmore Leonard
Writer
I've just seen Jackie Brown, Quentin Tarantino's adaptation of my book Rum Punch, and I loved it. It's obviously his picture, but at the same time it *is* the book, very close to my plot. Everyone's a little older in the film — the characters have been around, it's their last attempt to seek their fortune, hit it big. Pam Grier is great fun to watch. I've seen nothing bad recently.

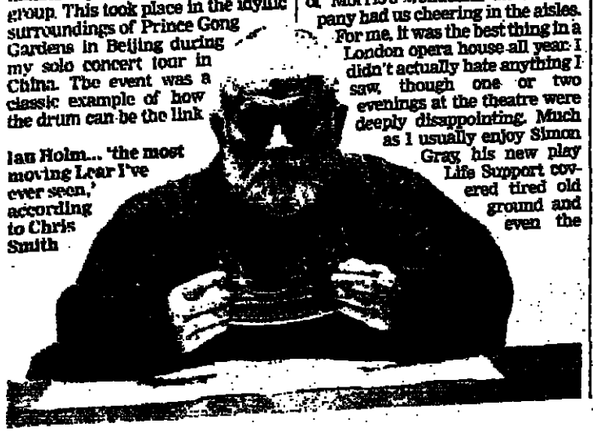
L'Allegro... 'had us cheering in the aisles,' recalls Sue MacGregor PHOTOGRAPH: NEIL LIBBERT

Evelyn Glennie
Percussionist
One of the most stimulating, exciting, colourful and educational musical events I experienced was an impromptu concert given in my honour by a Chinese traditional group. This took place in the idyllic surroundings of Prince Gong Gardens in Beijing during my solo concert tour in China. The event was a classic example of how the drum can be the link between one musician and another. I don't regret attending a single event during 1997: I view concerts from many angles, although presentation, lack of genuine communication and more often than not mediocre acoustics can leave me only partly satisfied.

Nikki Yeoh
Jazz pianist
For me, the high point of 1997 was Gonzalo Rubalcaba's week at Ronnie Scott's. He is the best pianist in the world. Also, seeing his band every night exemplified the need for a band to keep the same members for a long time, enabling effortless communication and versatility.

Sue MacGregor
Today presenter
I adored the Mark Morris version of Handel's l'Allegro, Il Penseroso Ed Il Moderato at the ENO's Coliseum in June. Astonishingly, this was Morris's London debut. The combination of Handel's sublime music — the Opera orchestra, chorus and soloists were conducted by Jane Glover — and the interpretive skills of Morris's wonderful dance company had us cheering in the aisles. For me, it was the best thing in a London opera house all year. I didn't actually hate anything I saw, though one or two evenings at the theatre were deeply disappointing. Much as I usually enjoy Simon Gray, his new play Life Support covered tired old ground and even the admirable Alan Bates seemed to be sleepwalking his way though it.

The Prodigy... 'a shining light,' says Gary Numan



Ian Holm... 'the most moving Lear I've ever seen,' according to Chris Smith

Dawn Airey
Director of programmes, Channel 5
The low point of the year for me was plastic pop culture. One of the most crass songs ever to get to number one is Barbie Girl by Aqua.

Ayub Khan Din
Playwright/actor
My favourite book of 1997 was Captain Corelli's Mandolin, a wonderful novel about a wonderful place. I thought it was very exciting and conjured up great images in my mind. It introduced me to my favourite place, Kefalonia.

Patrick Marber
Playwright/actor
High: Björk's current LP, Homogenic, because it's beautiful, strange and mysterious. Low: the Batman And Robin film because it was ugly, bad and tedious.

Michael Eavis
Mr Glastonbury
This was probably the most disappointing year for some time as far as pop is concerned. Nothing really new happened, and the major successes of the past few years had to make an effort to hold their own and ran too many repeat performances. Roll on 1998!

Gareth Valentine
Conductor of Chicago
The one production I adored this year was the marvellous staging of The Turn Of The Screw at the Barbican, directed by Deborah Warner. I thought it compelling and definitive. The thing I disliked was the movie Shine, based on the life story of David Helfgott, the unhinged concert pianist. I found it saccharine and manipulative.

Alan McGee
Creation Records boss
Highs: Oasis at Aberdeen SECC, the Howard Hodgkin exhibition, the Spiritualized LP, the Sensation exhibition, Shine, the movie, Kevin Shields coming back to musical life. Lows: TV soaps, art still being regarded as a middle-class haven.

Lesley Garrett
Opera singer
This has been a brilliant year for the arts. I joined the Old Vic mailing list with my husband this year and have seen some amazing plays there. Waiting For Godot was a highlight. The relationship between Ben Kingsley and Alan Howard was phenomenal. Rosie Ash's Think Pink at the Royal Academy of Music was a wonderful cabaret recital. Rosie Ash gave an amazing performance — she's the most versatile of singers. It was hysterical — a proper cabaret evening.

Jude Kelly
Artistic director, West Yorks Playhouse
Something that moved me this year was Mark Morris's l'Allegro at the Coliseum. It was so exuberant and joyful — really life-enhancing. Something that didn't move me was his Cherry Orchard at Edinburgh, partly because I was in awe of his expertise. It was dazzling but I couldn't get emotionally involved. I admired it but didn't enjoy it.

Chris Smith MP
Culture Minister
Apart from the wonderful and unforgettable night of May 1, the high point for me was seeing Ian Holm perform Lear at the Cottesloe. The starkest, most dramatic, most moving Lear I've ever seen, and experienced so closely that you could feel the power of the language. My cultural low was Keep The Aspidistra Flying, the opening film of the London Film Festival. Good acting, good period pieces, but I'm afraid it's not a book that translates well to the screen.

Dennis Skinner MP
Guys And Dolls was a brilliant production — good acting and singing. Sit Down, You're Rocking The Boat was the highlight of the show — I've never seen so many spontaneous encores. And Brassed Off was my favourite film. A great political message. People were cheering at the end.

Neil Hannon
The Divine Comedy
The best thing this year was Kraftwerk at Tribal Gathering. Being sandwiched between sweaty ravers in a circus tent somewhere in Bedfordshire is not generally my idea of fun, but then I only went to Tribal Gathering for one thing and it was the best decision I ever made. The worst thing was Oasis at Earl's Court. After 20 minutes of the biggest band in Britain, I realised I'd made a terrible mistake and went to see the Shirehorses instead.

Stephen Malkmus
Pavement
Cultural high: a book by Dennis Johnson called Already Dead. It's the best book by far this year, 10 times better than the competition, and way ahead of the game. Cultural low: techno music. It sounds like an autopsy or something.

Adrian Wootton
London Film Festival director
I managed to escape from the cinema for long enough to finally realise a long-time ambition when I saw the wonderful Johnny Cash at the Royal Albert Hall. As for lows, I was outraged by this year's Booker Prize list and the failure of the judges to even nominate Peter Carey for his spellbinding novel Jack Maggs.

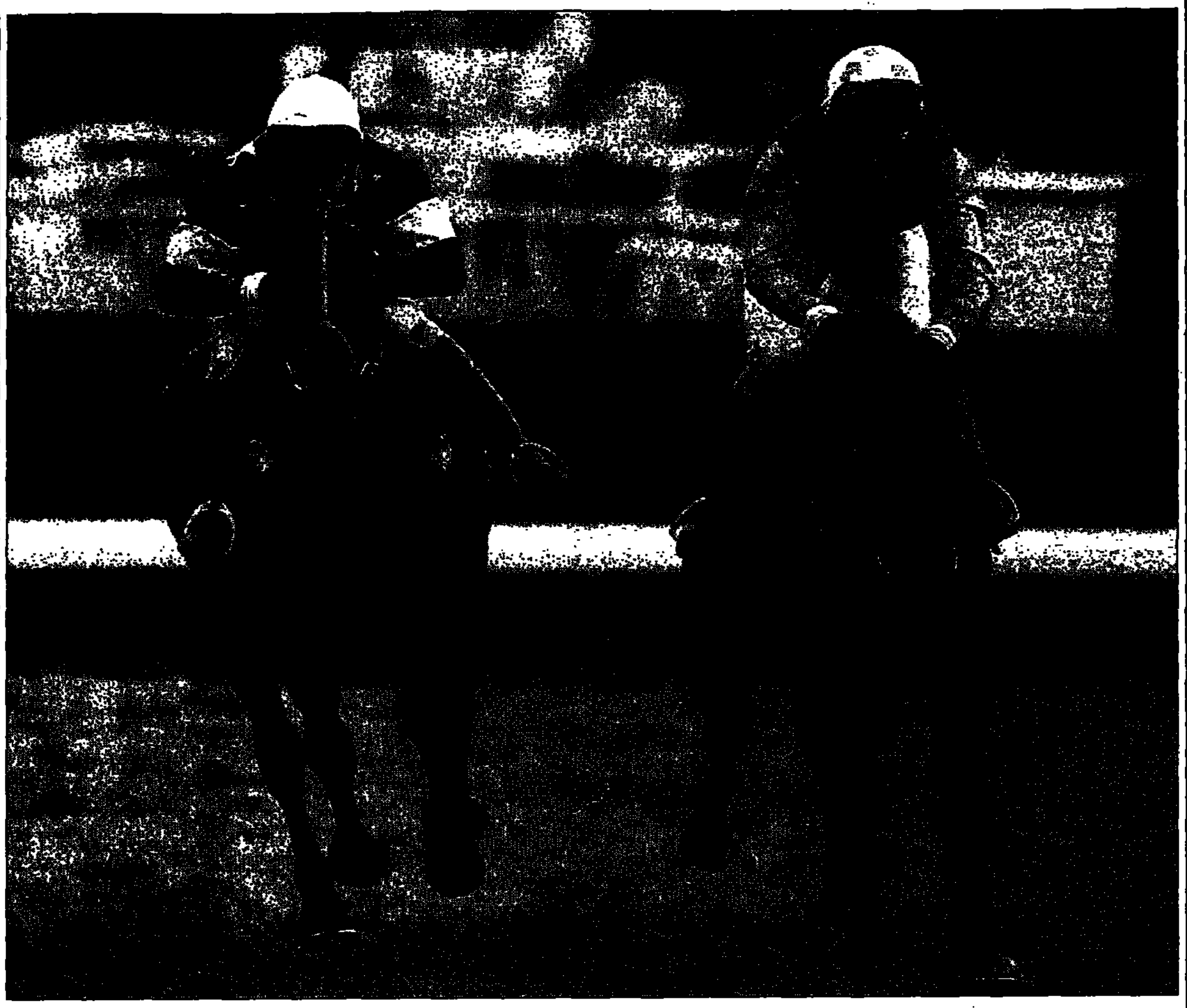
Gary Numan
Rock singer
The most depressing thing musically this year was the continued interest in boy bands. With their endless whimpering covers of old songs, most of which are best forgotten, painful dance routines and a sense of humour that makes Noddy seem intelligent, I'd hoped 1997 would have seen them fade disgracefully away. The high, undoubtedly, has been the Prodigy. They're unique, inventive and aggressive on record and on stage. In a business apparently stuck in a downward spiral of blandness, they are the shining light that proves individuality can still succeed.

Imelda Staunton in Guys And Dolls... a hit with Dennis Skinner

Racing

Chris Hawkins sees a performance of raw courage win the day in the King George VI Chase at Kempton Park

See More too strong at business end



Seeing is believing . . . See More Business (left) rallies to see off Challenger Du Luc on the run to the line in the King George PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK BARON

SEE MORE BUSINESS, originally rejected because he was too small, was big enough to do the business at Kempton Park yesterday when he won the Pertemps King George VI Chase after looking certain to be beaten at the last.

It was strength of character which decided the issue. Challenger du Luc was upsides and still on the bit coming to the final fence but the blinkers betrayed his fatal weakness and he surrendered on the run-in to be beaten two lengths.

Rough Quest was ten lengths away third followed by Suny Bay with One Man trailing in fifth, beaten a distance, after stopping as if shot between the final two fences.

The testing conditions were ideal for See More Business, backed from 14–1 to 10–1, but all against One Man, who drifted from 7–4 to 9–4.

Andrew Thornton went to the front after jumping four out on See More Business and, sensibly ignoring the pleas of Graham Bradley, riding a struggling Suny Bay, to go steady, stepped up the pace.

It was a move that meant Richard Dunwoody on One Man, attempting a hat-trick in the race, had to use up a little more of his precious petrol than he wanted and from cruising at the third last the needle suddenly swung over to empty and the engine petered out.

Challenger du Luc had not been shaken off, however. It would not be exaggerating to say that Tony McCoy had a double handful at the last but, knowing how this horse can chuck away races, he took a pull after the momentum of his leap took him a head in front.

He did not "go" for his mount until 100 yards out but by then it was too late — *Thornton, having no need of* the softly-softly approach, had the race buttoned-up.

A grateful Thornton pointed out that this was a spare ride: "See More Business is Timmy Murphy's ride but he's sitting at home suspended. It's one of those things — you've got to make the most of a spare.

"I gave him a chance by taking him to the outside to give him plenty of light and he gradually warmed to it. The idea was to be there turning in but I was there six out and coming to the fourth last I thought we might as well wind it up.

"Going to the last I could see a blinkered head but I always knew my horse would stay on."

See More Business is trained near Shepton Mallet by Paul Nicholls who now has the Cheltenham Gold Cup as the major objective.

"If the ground is soft at Cheltenham I can't wait to see him run up that hill," said Nicholls. "I wouldn't be worried if he doesn't have a run before Cheltenham as he goes well fresh. But one thing's pretty certain — Timmy Murphy will ride him. He's done the horse a power of good and schooled him on Christmas Eve."

See More Business is a best-priced *12–1 with all the major* bookmakers bar Coral who have him 7–1 second favourite. Ladbrokes cut Dorans Pride, twice the conqueror of See More Business last season, to 4–1 favourite from 9–2.

Paul Barber, joint-owner with John Keighley, a chartered accountant, who runs an engineering business in Sherborne, did not like the look of See More Business when he was first bought by his brother Richard for 5,800gns.

"I thought he was too small and I didn't want him but after he started winning point-to points I changed my *mind and had to buy him for* a lot more money although I'm not saying how much," commented Barber.

Challenger du Luc has now finished second in his last four races but has won place-money *of over £50,000 in his* career and Martin Pipe, his trainer, says he wishes he had a few more like him although he is clearly intent on being kind.

Rough Quest ran a good race in third considering he did not eat up overnight and trainer Terry Casey was in two minds whether to run him. Staying is his game and he will be much better suited *by the three and a quarter* miles of the Gold Cup for which he is a top priced 16–1.

Suny Bay, who had beaten See More Business at Haydock last month, ran disappointingly and a frustrated *Charlie Brooks commented:* "My horses are just not right at the moment — I can't put my finger on it."

As for One Man, he was sadly exposed as a talented but brittle performer short on stamina or guts. Apparently when it starts to hurt he just throws in the towel. Perhaps there is a physical explanation but if not he must be labelled faint-hearted.

Francois Doumen, with four King Georges to his name, has the midas touch at Kempton and proved it again by saddling Erintante, ridden by his son Thierry, to win the opening Pertemps Catering Novice Hurdle.

Erintante was the only one galloping at the end and there were some abysmal efforts notably by the odds-on favourite Zaralaska, pulled-up before the last.

A grim David Nicholson was at a loss to explain Zaralaska's poor run and then saw Forest Ivory run second in the Feltham Novice Chase to Fiddling The Facts, the first leg of a double for trainer Nicky Henderson and jockey Mick Fitzgerald, later successful with Serenus.

Indian Tracker the Pipe ace in Welsh National

Ron Cox

RARELY can a race have been more aptly named. The Rehearsal Chase, run at Chepstow three weeks ago, proved the stepping stone to King George success for See More Business yesterday, and back at Chepstow today Indian Tracker, the four lengths runner-up, should be tuned up for his assault on the Coral Welsh National.

One of four runners in the marathon chase for Martin Pipe, who has trained five of the last six winners of the race when it has been run at Chepstow — it was re-routed to Newbury in 1994 — Indian Tracker is a sound jumper who will relish the testing conditions underfoot.

Amazingly, he was having only his fourth run over fences when second to See More Business here when he led until overhauled by the winner two out and *kept on well to finish eight* lengths clear of Banjo, who never really recovered from a bad mistake at the ninth.

Indian Tracker's only poor effort so far came on fast ground at last season's Cheltenham Festival. He was sent *straight from* bumper races to novice chases, winning well at Hereford and then finishing second to Tennessee Twist at Chepstow, again well clear of the third horse, Baronet.

Baronet went on to finish a close third behind Belmont King and Samlee in the Scottish National, suggesting Indian Tracker is nicely handicapped at present. Given his lightly-raced record, he is surely capable of further improvement.

Cyborgo, whose only defeat over fences last season came on unsuitable ground in the Gold Cup, goes well fresh and lack of a recent run need not count against him.

Pipe has made no secret of the fact that this has been Cyborgo's first main target of the season, but with 11st 13lb to carry over such a demanding course the seven-year-old may struggle to give weight to some of these.

Evangelica and Dom Samourai complete the Pipe onslaught and the latter is well worth a close look. A French import, he has taken time to find his form but could be very well in.

Last month's Haydock second to Him Of Praise was a sound effort, and Dom Samourai has since won well here when he had Giventime 12 lengths back in fourth.

Giventime has claims on his best form, which includes a verdict over Belmont King over three and a quarter miles here in March. Cariboo Gold is also interesting following a *pipe-opener* at Lingfield, but among the other market leaders Bells *Life* does not appeal as an out-and-out stayer.

Indian Tracker (1.55) and Dom Samourai can maintain Pipe's stranglehold, with Giventime best of the *remainder*.

Champleve (12.20) and Rainwatch (1.20), both partnered by Tony McCoy, look other likely Pipe winners. McCoy can also score on the Venetia Williams-trained Sparkling Cone (12.50), who looks very well *handicapped*.

At Kempton, Sanmartino (2.20) can make his fitness tell against Shadow Leader in the Pertemps Christmas Hurdle. Soft ground may not be ideal for Sanmartino, but he coped well enough with similar conditions when trouncing I'm Supposin at Newbury.

Barber takes a cut at Sheikh

PAUL BARBER had some *strong advice* for Sheikh Mohammed after his See More Business had won yesterday's big race at Kempton, *writes Chris Hawkins.*

The Sheikh sparked a major controversy in his Gimcrack speech when bemoaning abysmal prizemoney levels in this country, and threatening to close down his racing operation if there is no significant improvement.

"I would tell him to come racing for the fun of it, not treat it as a business. If you don't like the prizemoney then get out," said Barber, who is interested only in jumping, the "poor relation" of the racing game.

Barber added: "If your hobby is shooting, golf or football you don't get any prizemoney — you pay for the privilege. If you put money into horses that's your decision and you can only expect to say goodbye to it.

"I've got 10 partnership horses and get as much pleasure out of winning point-to-points worth £100 as I do out of the big races. Money is not what it's all about."

Kempton Jackpot programme with form guide

	RON COX	TOP FORM
12.40	Real Estate	Real Estate
1.10	Super Tactics (nb)	Super Tactics
1.45	Hurricane Lamp	Hurricane Lamp
2.20	Sanmartino	Sanmartino
2.55	Ciel De Brion	Oatis Regrets
3.25	Royal Piper	Summer Spell

Flat, rather sharp, right-handed track of 1m5f with 175yds run-in.
Going: Soft, Good to Soft in places. ★ Denotes blinkers.
Long distance travellers: *Secret Service (3.25), C R Barwell, Devon, 184 miles:* Amlah (1.45) & Orswell Lad (2.55), P J Hobbs, Somerset, 155 miles; Fatalista (12.40) & Running de Corley (12.40), M Pipe, Devon, 153 miles
Seven day winners: None.
Blinkered first time: None. **Visored:** None.
Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. F.Flat.

12.40 PERTEMPS CALEDONIAN NOVICE HURDLE 3YO
2m £5,289 (15 declared)

101	1F1133	Running De Corley (22) (D) (BF) M Pipe 11-12	[illegible]	78
102	5611?4	Fatalista (44) (D) (BF) M Pipe 11-8	N Williamson	79
103	411	Virtuoso (12) (D) C Mann 11-8		78
104	412	Real Estate (15) (D) D Nicholson 11-4	A Maguire	●98
105		Another Night (F87) P Murphy 11-0	P Hide	—
106		Assailable (F88) N Callaghan 11-0	DOUBTFUL	—
107		Darcy (F114) N Callaghan 11-0	Sophie Mitchell	—
108	2	Majesty (22) S Dow 11-0	M A Fitzgerald	79
109		Mardrew (F88) John Berry 11-0	B Powell	—
110		Paddlebrook N Babbage 11-0	R Greene	—
111	3	Shariadarid (16) S Dow 11-0	M Richards	77
112		Tom Silk (F90) P R Webber 11-0	A Thornton	—
113	P	Upgrade (38) N Twiston-Davies 11-0	C Llewellyn	—
114		Wing of A Prayer (F182) P Mitchell 11-0	J Culloty	—
115	4	Kalisko (16) C Egerton 10-9	B Fenton	78

Betting: 7-4 Real Estate, 5-1 Tom Silk, 6-1 Majesty, 7-1 Running De Corley, 9-1 Fatalista, 14-1 Shariadarid, Kalisko, Another Night
● Virtuoso's first preference is Chepstow 1.20

FORM GUIDE - Running De Corley: Penultimate start, led until weakened app last, 13l 3rd behind Supply And Demand at Newbury 2m110yds Hdl, Gd. **Fatalista:** Led and soon clear, headed 2 out, no extra, 16l 4th of 15 behind Sad Mad Bad at Market Rasen 2m1f nov hdl, Gd. **Virtuoso:** Made all, clear 4th, pushed out, won by 5l from Keen Dancer at Warwick 2m nov hdl, Gd. **Real Estate:** Headway 3 out, outpaced after 2 out, rallying and 2nd when blundered last, 11l 2nd of 13 behind Sound Appeal at Cheltenham 2m1f nov hdl, Sft. **Majesty:** Good headway from 2 out, chased winner flat, ran on, 5l 2nd of 12 behind Tough Act, with Running De Corley (gave 7lb), led until headed last, 10l away 3rd, at Sandown 2m nov hdl, Sft. **Shariadarid:** Chased leader, lost and dropped away 2 out, 22l 3rd of 10 behind Misty Cay with Kalisko (rec 5lb) another 3l away 4th, at Folkestone 2m nov hdl, Gd-Sft.

1.10 PERTEMPS EXECUTIVE NETWORK H'CAP CHASE — CH4
2m 4f 110yds £10,241 (5 declared)

201	/12 33	Coulton (14) (BD) O Sherwood 10-12-0	N Williamson	87
202	2-3113	Super Tactics (7) (CD) R Alner 9-10-12	A Thornton	●90
203	44/342	Southolt (794) G Hubbard 9-10-4	B Fenton	—
204	113-1101	Kadi (14) (D) D Nicholson 8-10-0	A Maguire	86
205	20P-41	Edredon Bleu (23) (D) Miss H Knight 5-10-0	J Culloty	79

Betting: 7-4 Super Tactics, 5-2 Edredon Bleu, 4-1 Coulton, 5-1 Kadi, 9-1 Southolt

FORM GUIDE - Coulton: Has failed to stay in 2 races over 3m, latest held up, hit 13th and 4 out, weakened next, tailed off 3rd of 4 behind The Grey Monk at Haydock, Sft. **Super Tactics:** Led 4th to 7th, every chance 3 out, hard ridden, unable to quicken, 6l 3rd of 7 behind Celibate at Ascot 2m hcap ch, Gd-Sft. **Southolt:** Effort 3 out, not quicken, finished lame, 13l 3rd of 3 behind Destin Dove at Sandown 2m 4f hcap ch, Gd-Fm, in Nov '95. **Kadi:** Held up, blundered badly 11th, not recover, tailed off last of 9 behind Senor El Betrutti at Cheltenham 2m 5f hcap ch, Sft. **Edredon Bleu:** Suited by right-hand track, jumped well, made all, pecked 9th, ridden out, won by 3l from Cherry's Lad at Leicester 2m 4f hcap ch, Gd.

1.45 PERTEMPS CREAM WAYWARD LAD NOVICE CHASE — CH4
2m 4f 110yds £10,211 (6 declared)

301	121253	Amlah (22) P Hobbs 5-11-7	M A Fitzgerald	89
302	13-314	Dontleavethenest (35) R Curtis 7-11-7	N Williamson	88
303	111-01	Sir Dante (11) (D) R Rowe 8-11-7	A Thornton	86
304	/2F2-6	Angelo's Double (28) (CD) R Buckler 9-11-3	B Powell	84
305	112F-6	Hurricane Lamp (21) D Nicholson 8-11-3	A Maguire	●90
306	4-2	Bay Lough (18) R Rowe 6-10-12	B Fenton	78

Betting: 2-1 Hurricane Lamp, 11-4 Angelo's Double, 7-2 Sir Dante, 6-1 Amlah, 8-1 Dontleavethenest, 16-1 Bay Lough

FORM GUIDE - Amlah: Chased leader, led 4th to 10th, led 11th to 2 out, unable to quicken, 2l 3rd of 5 behind Wise King at Sandown 2m 4f nov ch, Sft. **Dontleavethenest:** Held up, chased leader 4 out until approaching last, soon weakened, 15l 4th of 5 behind Chief's Song at Ascot 2m nov ch, Sft. **Sir Dante:** Made all, clear approaching last, very easily, won by distance from Who Am I at Folkestone 2m 5f nov ch, Gd. **Hurricane Lamp:** Headway approaching 3 out, weakening when mistake 3 out, 9l 6th of 7 behind Direct Route at Sandown 2m nov ch, Sft.

2.20 PERTEMPS CHRISTMAS HURDLE — CH4
2m £24,945 (5 declared)

401	12F-U0	Chai-Yo (21) (D) J Old 7-11-7	M A Fitzgerald	76
402	140-23	I'm Supposin (7) (D) (BF) R Rowe 5-11-7	A Thornton	78
403	00-236	Kerawi (21) (D) N Twiston-Davies 4-11-7	C Llewellyn	81
404	61-111	Sanmartino (28) (CD) D Nicholson 5-11-7	A Maguire	●90
405	1111-	Shadow Leader (252) (D) C Egerton 6-11-7	N Williamson	89

Betting: 10-11 Sanmartino, 7-4 Shadow Leader, 11-2 I'm Supposin, 16-1 Chai-Yo, Kerawi

FORM GUIDE - I'm Supposin: Below best so far this season, latest chased leader, led 5th to last, weakened flat, 7l 3rd of 5 behind Mr Markham at Ascot 2m hdl, Gd-Sft. **Sanmartino:** Held up, went 2nd 5th, led 2 out, ran on strongly, won by 13l from I'm Supposin (rec 6lb) at Newbury 2m hdl, Sft. **Shadow Leader:** Held up, led before last, not extended, won by 3l from Zabadi, with I'm Supposin (gave 16lb), btn 14l in 7th, at Ayr 2m hcp hdl, Gd.

2.55 LT. RECRUITMENT NETWORK HANDICAP CHASE — CH4
3m £6,983 (8 declared)

501	1-6024	Ciel De Brion (28) F Doumen (FR) 7-11-10	Mr T Doumen ★	87
502	4/43-1	Oatis Regrets (22) Miss H Knight 9-11-3	A Maguire	●90
503	1/1 5F	Redeemyourself (22) (C) (BF) J Gifford 8-10-13	B Powell	81
504	U1-1U4	Frazer Island (21) (D) (BF) R Rowe 8-10-11	A Thornton	87
505	/113-F	Arfer Mole (22) J Old 9-10-11	M A Fitzgerald	85
506	16-U22	Andre Laval (17) (D) (BF) K Bailey 8-10-8	N Williamson	84
507	1P1-25	Orswell Lad (21) P Hobbs 8-10-8		83
508	123F-1	Scoresheet (49) J Gifford 7-10-0	P Hide	83

Betting: 7-2 Arfer Mole, 4-1 Oatis Regrets, Ciel De Brion, 5-1 Scoresheet, 7-1 Redeemyourself, Andre Laval, 9-1 Frazer Island
● Orswell Lad's first preference is Chepstow 12.50.

FORM GUIDE - Ciel De Brion: Headway 11th, ridden before 2 out, one pace, 23l 4th of 14 behind Suny Bay at Newbury 3m2f hcap ch, Sft. **Oatis Regrets:** Made virtually all, mistake 8th, driven out, won by 2l from Union Rocks, with Arfer Mole (rec 3lb), disputing lead when fell heavily at last, and Redeemyourself (rec 1lb), 8l 5th held when fell 2 out, at Sandown 2m4f hcap ch, Gd. **Scoresheet:** Headway 11th, led before last, easily, won by 7l from Kod's Promise at Wincanton 2m 5f hcap ch, Gd.

3.25 PERTEMPS EDUCATION NETWORK HANDICAP HURDLE
2m 5f £5,597 (7 declared)

601	5341-3	Summer Spell (64) (C) N Henderson 4-11-10	M A Fitzgerald	●90
602	3-1451	Fire Ball (14) F Doumen (FR) 4-11-6	Mr T Doumen	88
603	12-626	Khalidi (23) (D) D Gandolfo 8-10-8	Sophie Mitchell (5)	88
604	-12244	Secret Service (21) C Barwell 5-10-5	B Fenton	88
605	3-1135	Pealings (28) (D) G Hubbard 5-10-3	A Maguire	86
606	31-F4P	Royal Piper (21) A J Wilson 10-10-3	R Greene	86
607	/221-5	Three Farthings (33) (BF) J Old 7-10-3	C Llewellyn	87

Betting: 9-4 Fire Ball, 4-1 Three Farthings, 5-1 Summer Spell, Pealings, 8-1 Secret Service, Khalidi

FORM GUIDE - Summer Spell: Chased winner 3 out until blundered last, one pace, 14l 3rd of 10 behind Disallowed at Chepstow 2m hcap hdl, Gd-Fm. **Fire Ball:** Chased leader from 4th, led approaching last, comfortably, won by 8l from The Cottage at Lingfield 2m3f nov hdl, Sft. **Khalidi:** In rear from 7th, 6th of 8, 28l behind Nashville Star at Windsor 2m hcap ch, Gd. **Secret Service:** Held up and behind, headway 4 out, weakened next, 26l 4th of 8 behind Sesame Seed at Chepstow 2m 4f hcap hdl, Sft. **Pealings:** Tracked leaders until ridden and weakened 5th, last of 5 behind Splendid Thyne at Warwick 2m 3f hcap hdl, Sft. **Royal Piper:** Always behind, tailed off when pulled up after the last in race won by Friendship at Sandown 2m 6f hcap hdl, Sft. **Three Farthings:** Held up, hit 5th, headway 6th, blundered 7th, not recover, 31l 5th of 7 behind Sesame Seed at Worcester 2m 4f hcap hdl, Sft.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

Jockeys	1st	Runs	%	Level St	Trainers	1st	Runs	%	Level St
J Osborne	27	103	26.2	+28.42	D Nicholson	18	69	27.5	-3.13
A Maguire	25	94	26.6	+0.87	K C Bailey	12	52	23.1	+0.82
M A Fitzgerald	18	102	17.6	-12.78	R H Alner	11	37	29.7	+28.76
N Williamson	16	73	21.9	+3.78	N J Henderson	11	72	15.3	-8.00
R Dunwoody	15	85	17.6	-35.59	M C Pipe	10	50	20.0	-10.95
A P McCoy	9	65	13.8	-17.22	J T Gifford	9	77	11.7	-22.97
P Hide	7	55	12.7	-11.30	D R Gandolfo	8	18	44.4	+19.60

Trainer watch

Horses who are having their first run for a new trainer today — **Kempton:** 12.40 Another Night, R Hannon to P Murphy; Assailable, A Stewart to N Callaghan; Darcy, M Stoute to N Callaghan; Tom Silk, J Dar to P Webber & Wing of A Prayer, W Jarvis to P Mitchell. **Wetherby:** 1.00 Fathom, P Walwyn to K Morgan; Norman Conquest, I Balding to M Hammond; Saltimbanco, R Akehurst to N Waggott; 2.00 Lethal Cocktail, N Meade to J H Johnson. **Leicester:** 1.05 Aldway Blue, A Turnell to R E Peacock; 1.35 Balmoral Princess, J H Peacock to D McCain & Glenrade, P Chapple-Hyam to J Harris; 3.10 Imad, J White to K Comerford. **Chepstow:** 12.20 Knockaroo, K F O'Sullivan to D Wintle; 1.20 Shaded, S Dow to P R Rodford; 3.30 Westfield Mist, J Hetherton to P Eccles.

Leopardstown

2.40 PADDY POWER HANDICAP CHASE — CH4
3m £59,050 (22 declared)

1	210-0F	Wylde Hide (28) (C) (D) A L Moore 10-12-0	J Shortt
2	P2F001	New Co (14) (4lb ex) (D) M Morris 9-11-10	Mr A J Martin
3	043271	Lord Singapore (21) (C) (D) J Walsh 9-11-9	D J Casey
4	P-P306	Bishops Hall (43) (CD) H De Bromhead 11-11-7	R P Hogan (5)
5	11F-F	Corket (20) A P O'Brien 7-11-7	Mr C A Murphy (7)
6	2146-1	Papillon (27) T Walsh 6-11-7	Mr R Walsh
7	11-000	Ultra Flutter (7) (C) (D) M Hourigan 10-11-5	J M Maguire (5)
8	142-4P	Time For A Run (28) (CD) E O'Grady 10-11-1	Mr P Fenton
9	121/30	Gimme Five (14) (D) E O'Grady 10-11-0	C F Swan
10	3-3034	[illegible] (20) (D) P Heffernan 8-11-0	K F O'Brien
11	152 41	Bobbyjo (28) T Carberry 7-10-13	G Cotter
12	214312	Heist (28) (C) (D) (BF) N Meade 8-10-13	J F Titley
13	15-000	Trydilion (48) (C) (D) V Bowens 8-10-12	K Whelan
14	/002-0	Whale Of A Knight (28) (C) A L Moore 8-10-10	C O'Dwyer
15	14/130	Harness Harvest (7) (D) D Williams (UK) 9-10-9	Mr S Durack (5)
16	-1133	Solvang (14) (D) D Kelly 5-10-7	G Bradley
17	504435	Back Bar (41) A L Moore 9-10-3	T M Cash ★
18	422176	Macnamarasband (28) (D) E Hales 8-10-3	T J Mitchell
19	24-133	Tell The Nipper (41) (D) (BF) M Hourigan 6-10-3	P J Hourigan (3)
20	1-0541	Uno's Choice (28) (5lb ex) (D) F Flood 9-10-0	F J Flood
21	451515	Rybane (45) (D) A L Moore 8-9-10	T P Treacy
22	061014	Pasture Bar (34) (C) (D) P Day 10-9-7	DOUBTFUL

Betting: 6-1 Papillon, 13-2 Gimme Five, 8-1 Bobbyjo, 9-1 Corket, 10-1 Time For A Run, 11-1 Lord Singapore, 12-1 New Co, Whale Of A Knight, Heist, 14-1 Uno's Choice

Chepstow televised seven-race meeting

	RON COX	TOP FORM
12.20	Champleve	Champleve
12.50	Sparkling Cone (nap)	Sparkling Cone
1.20	Rainwatch	Rainwatch
1.55	Indian Tracker	Cariboo Gold
2.30	Dr Leunt	Dr Leunt
3.00	Sadler's Realm	Bold Statement
3.30	Mesktill	——

Oval, left-handed undulating course, nearly 2m round with 250yds run-in. Five fences in home *straight put emphasis on stamina.*
Going: Heavy. ★ Denotes blinkers.
Long distance travellers: Sad Mad Bad (1.20) Mrs M Reveley, Cleveland, 253 miles; Kings Measure (3.30), J M Jefferson, N Yorks, 225 miles.
Seven day winners: 1.20 Kilbride Lad.
Blinkered first time: 2.30 Landed Gentry. **Visored:** None.
Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. F.Flat.

12.20 CALOR GAS NOVICE HURDLE
2m 4f 110yds £3,487 (10 declared)

1	4F-611	Champleve (38) M Pipe 4-11-12	A P McCoy	●90
2	0	Argeably (65) G Balding 5-11-0	Mr E Babington (7)	—
3	3-0	Brush With Fame (21) P Hobbs 5-11-0	G Tormey	—
4	1-33	Crabapple Hill (41) (BF) D Nicholson 5-11-0	R Thornton	84
5	12/3-	Ever Blessed (408) Mrs J Pitman 5-11-0	R Dunwoody	87
6	0-4440	Knockaroo (F61) D Wintle 6-11-0	R Bellamy	80
7	0-6	River Mulligan (31) P Hobbs 5-11-0	D Bridgwater	—
8	1/20-5	The Land Agent (33) J Mullins 6-11-0	P Niven	80
9	00-	Time To Parlez (308) C Drewe 6-11-0	P Holley	—
10	633	Bally Lira (31) P Rodford 5-10-9	S Burrough	—

Betting: 10-11 Champleve, 7-2 Ever Blessed, 11-2 Crabapple Hill, 8-1 The Land Agent, 10-1 River Mulligan, 20-1 Brush With Fame, Knockaroo.

FORM GUIDE - Champleve: Made all, *clear* 5th, won unchallenged, beating Desert Power a distance at Newton Abbot, 2m 1f nov hdle, Sft. **Crabapple Hill:** Pulled hard, every chance 8th, led approaching two out, soon headed, weakened flat, 3rd to Christchurch, btn 9l at Towcester, 2m 5f nov hdle, Good. **Ever Blessed:** Blundered two out, headway and mistake last, ran on well, finished 3rd to Aerion at Newbury, 2m nov hdle, Gd. **The Land Agent:** Always prominent, every chance three out, eased when beaten after last, finished 5th to Lord Of The River at Windsor, 2m 4f nov hdle, Gd-Fm.

12.50 LEVY BOARD HANDICAP CHASE — BBC2
2m 3f 110yds £4,923 (9 declared)

1	5141P-	Denver Bay (258) J Gifford 10-12-0	L Aspell (3)	90
2	1P1-25	Oswell Lad (21) P Hobbs 8-11-7	Mr R Widger (7)	85
3	023-1U	With Impunity (18) (CD) (BF) P Nicholls 8-11-4	R Dunwoody	87
4	-11222	Coolteen Hero (23) (D) R Alner 7-10-13	P Holley	86
5	1014-4	Indian Arrow (12) (BF) M Pipe 9-10-12	C Maude	81
6	22P-31	Well Timed (12) (5lb ex) R Frost 7-10-7	J Frost	87
7	03-U31	Early Drinker (28) (D) O Sherwood 9-10-4	J A McCarthy	84
8	3/5P-1	Sparkling Cone (8) (6lb ex) Miss V Williams 8-10-4	A P McCoy	●90
9	4P0P3-	Benjamin Lancaster (294) (C) M Griffin 13-10-0	R Thornton	86

Betting: 5-4 Sparkling Cone, 11-2 Well Timed, 6-1 With Impunity, 8-1 Coolteen Hero, Early Drinker, 10-1 Indian Arrow, Oswell Lad, 20-1 Denver Bay, 25-1 Benjamin Lancaster.

FORM GUIDE - Denver Bay: Always in the rear, tailed off when pulled up 4 out in race won by Le Mailla at Cheltenham 3m 2l hcap ch, Gd-Fm. **Oswell Lad:** Held up, headway 17th, led 5 out until 4 out, weakened 2 out, 5th of 7, 12l behind Dom Samourai at Chepstow 3m 2f hcap ch, Sft. **With Impunity:** Led until blundered and unseated rider at the 10th in race won by Yeoman Warrior at Cheltenham 2m 5f cond hcap ch, Gd. **Coolteen Hero:** Led, blundered 3 out, headed approaching last, ran on, 2nd of 6, nk behind Nashville Star at Windsor 2m hcap ch, Gd. **Well Timed:** In touch, chased leaders 2 out, ridden out to lead flat, won at N Abbot 2m hcap ch, Hvy, beating Thursday Night by a hd, with Indian Arrow (gave 10lb), led, mistake 3rd, soon headed, in touch until weakened 9th, 4th of 9, btn 18l. **Early Drinker:** Disputed 8th, challenged 2 out, hard ridden to lead close home, won at Haydock 2m 4f hcap ch, Sft, beating Billyline by a nk. **Sparkling Cone:** Prominent, led 10th, mistake next, clear approaching 2 out, easily, won at Towcester 2m 6f nov ch, Sft, beating Strong Vision by 12l. **Benjamin Lancaster:** Never on terms with leaders, 3rd of 7, 15l behind Donjuan Collonges at Chepstow 2m 3f hcap ch, Gd-Sft.

1.20 FINALE JUNIOR HURDLE 3YO — BBC2
2m 110yds £15,394 (7 declared)

1	34	Borazon (15) N Twiston-Davies 11-0	C Maude	78
2	321	Kilbride Lad (7) (D) D Nicholson 11-0	R Thornton	82
3	1	Rainwatch (29) (D) M Pipe 11-0	A P McCoy	●90
4	11	Sad Mad Bad (28) (D) Mrs M Reveley 11-0	P Niven	80
5	0	Shaded (F61) P Rodford 11-0	S Burrough	—
6	411	Virtuoso (12) (D) C Mann 11-0	R Dunwoody	79
7	0	Foleys Quest (12) J S Moore 10-9	W McFarland	77

Betting: 4-5 Rainwatch, 4-1 Kilbride Lad, Sad Mad Bad, 11-2 Virtuoso, 16-1 Borazon.

FORM GUIDE - Borazon: Lost place 3rd, stayed on from 2 out, never dangerous, 4th of 13, 27l behind Sound Appeal at Cheltenham 2m 1f nov hdl, Gd. **Kilbride Lad:** Held up, headway 3 out, led approaching last, soon clear, very easily, won at Haydock 2m nov hdl, Gd-Sft, beating Wardin by 5l. **Rainwatch:** Made all, clear 5th, blundered last, ran on, comfortably, won at Newbury 2m nov hdl, Sft, beating Kilbride Lad (levels) by 6l. **Sad Mad Bad:** Close up, led from 6th, held on well flat, won at Newcastle 2m nov hdl, Gd, beating City Hall by a shd. **Shaded:** Always behind, 8th of 9, 42l behind Sound Appeal at Kempton 2m nov hdl, Gd. **Virtuoso:** Made all, clear 4th, pushed out, won at Warwick 2m nov hdl, Gd, beating Keen Dancer by 5l, with Foleys Quest (rec 12lb), held up and behind, some headway from 3 out, never nearer, 7th of 20, btn 25l.

1.55 CORAL WELSH NATIONAL HANDICAP CHASE — BBC2
3m 5f 110yds £30,846 (15 declared)

1	1P21-F	Belmont King (28) (C) P Nicholls 9-12-0	R Dunwoody	86
2	11101-	Cyborgo (257) (C) M Pipe 7-11-13	A P McCoy	87
3	/P6-13	Banjo (21) (BF) D Nicholson 7-11-11	R Thornton	87
4	1301-3	Bells Life (14) (C) P Hobbs 8-11-3	G Tormey	89
5	25P/55	Earth Summit (21) (C) N Twiston-Davies 9-10-13	T Jenks ★	—
6	/120-2	Indian Tracker (21) M Pipe 7-10-12	C Maude	88
7	R113/P	Greenhill Tare Away (21) (C) P Hobbs 9-10-7	S McNeill	—
8	2-3511	Samlee (22) (4lb ex) (C) (D) P Hobbs 8-10-5	D Bridgwater	85
9	420-51	Evangelica (62) (C) M Pipe 7-10-3	G Supple (5)	88
10	11P-24	Giventime (21) (C) (BF) A Turnell 9-10-2	L Harvey	79
11	400-U5	Killeshin (7) H Manners 11-10-1	S Curran	82
12	1131-3	Cariboo Gold (14) K Bailey 8-10-1	P Carberry ★	●90
13	4006-P	Dalgyns Boy (35) (C) N Twiston-Davies 12-10-0	D Leahy	84
14	05-121	Dom Samourai (21) (4lb ex) (C) M Pipe 6-10-0	J A McCarthy ★	82
15	66-F53	Feodbroker Star (21) J Gifford 7-10-0	O Burrows (5)	79

Betting: 9-2 Indian Tracker, 5-1 Cyborgo, 7-1 Samlee, Cariboo Gold, 8-1 Belmont King, Bells Life, 9-1 Banjo, 10-1 Giventime, 11-1 Dom Samourai, 20-1 Killeshin, 25-1 Earth Summit, Greenhill Tare Away, Evangelica, 50-1 Dalgyns Boy, Feodbroker Star.

FORM GUIDE - Belmont King: Headway 10th, led 15th until 16th, 3rd and beaten when fell 2 out in race won by Suny Bay at Newbury 3m 2f hcap ch, Gd-Sft. **Cyborgo:** Led from 9th, ran on well, won at Aintree 3m 1f nov ch (A) gd in Apr beating The Last Fling by 3l. **Bells Life:** Held up mid-division, headway 13th, one pace from 3 out, 3rd of 9, 11l behind Senor El Betrutti at Cheltenham 2m 5f hcap ch, Gd. **Indian Tracker:** Led until approaching 2 out, one pace, 2nd of 6, 4l behind See More Business at Chepstow 3m hcap ch, Sft, with Banjo (gave 13lb), lost place 9th, hit 5 out, stayed on from 2 out, 3rd of 6, btn 12l. **Earth Summit** (gave 1lb), prominent, ridden 13th, weakened 5 out, 5th of 6, btn 30l and **Greenhill Tare Away** (rec 5lb), prominent until weakened 5 out, tailed off when pulled up 2 out. **Samlee:** Headway approaching 3 out, hard ridden flat, led near finish, won at Sandown 3m 5f hcap ch, Gd, beating What A Hand by 1l. **Evangelica:** In touch, challenged 2 out, led approaching last, drew clear flat, won at N Abbot 3m 2f hcap ch, Gd-Fm, beating Flow by 3l. **Killeshin:** Always in rear, reminders 12th, jumped slowly 17th, soon tailed off, 5th of 8, 34l behind Him Of Praise at Haydock 4m hcap ch, Gd-Sft. **Cariboo Gold:** Chased winner until after 5th, weakened approaching 3 out, 3rd of 4, well behind Monks Soham at Lingfield 2m 4f hcap ch, Sft. **Dalgyns Boy:** Ridden and lost place 8th, soon tailed off pulled up at the 14th in race won by Samlee at Aintree 3m 3f hcap ch, Gd-Sft. **Dom Samourai:** Always prominent, hard ridden to lead 4 out, ran on well, won at Chepstow 3m 2f hcap ch, Sft, beating River Mandate by 13l with Giventime (gave 11lb), chased leader until 17th, weakened approaching 2 out, 4th of 7, btn 12l.

2.30 JULIAN WILSON FAREWELL NOVICE CHASE — BBC2
2m 3f 110yds £3,579 (5 declared)

1	650-12	Dr Leunt (82) (BF) P Hobbs 6-11-8	R Dunwoody	●90
2	6-1F42	Thursday Night (12) (D) P Nicholls 6-11-8	Mr J Tizzard (5)	89
3	3/5625	Landed Gentry (21) (D) (BF) J O'Shea 8-11-2	Michael Brennan (3) ★	88
4	011-F5	Strong Paladin (28) (D) J Gifford 6-11-2	L Aspell (3)	82
5	P4-PU6	Knowing (11) P Wardes 10-10-11	Dr P Pritchard	—

Betting: 5-6 Dr Leunt, 11-4 Thursday Night, 5-1 Landed Gentry, Strong Paladin, 66-1 Knowing.

FORM GUIDE - Dr Leunt: Led until fell last, remounted and shaken up to hold 2nd place flat, 2nd of 3, 30l behind Galatasori Jane at N Abbot 3m 2f nov ch, Gd-Fm. **Thursday Night:** Led 3rd, made rest until ridden and headed flat, no extra, 2nd of 9, hd behind Well Timed at N Abbot 2m hcap ch, Hvy. **Landed Gentry:** Lost place 9th, rallied 5 out, soon weakened, 5th of 6, well behind Stormy Passage at Chepstow 2m 3f nov ch, Sft. **Strong Paladin:** Chased leader to 7th, every chance 4 out, weakened 3 out, tailed off, 6th of 7, well behind Sounds Fyne at Newbury 2m 4f ch, Gd-Sft.

3.00 SOUTH-WEST RACING CLUB CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS' HANDICAP HURDLE
2m 110yds £2,320 (7 declared)

1	211-25	Bold Statement (32) (D) (BF) T Forster 5-12-0	R Thornton	●90
2	/61-22	World Express (31) (D) B Millman 7-11-12	D Salter (3) ★	89
3	2-0121	Sadler's Realm (22) (D) P Hobbs 4-11-2	E Callaghan	86
4	42/25-	Beyond Our Reach (369) (D) R Hodges 9-10-13	J Harris (7)	85
5	P005-6	Manolete (12) (D) Mrs M Jones 6-10-10	M Dunne (3)	—
6	0616	Fabolon (88) (BF) M Pipe 4-10-7	G Supple (3)	84
7	/3044-	Rare Occurance (270) J O'Shea 7-10-0	Michael Brennan (3)	88

Betting: 7-4 Sadler's Realm, 7-2 Bold Statement, World Express, 4-1 Fabolon, 12-1 Rare Occurance, 16-1 Beyond Our Reach, 33-1 Manolete.

FORM GUIDE - Bold Statement: Prominent, chased leader 4th till approaching two out, beaten approaching last, finished 5th to Tibetan btn 10l at Huntingdon, 2m hcp hdle, Gd. **World Express:** Always prominent, every chance flat, unable to quicken, finished 2nd to Ivor's Flutter btn 3l at Windsor 2m 6f hcap hdle, Gd-Fm. **Sadler's Realm:** In touch, chased leader approaching two out, led approaching last, soon clear, easily beat Walter's Destiny by 8l at Exeter, 2m 2f hcap hdle, Sft.

3.30 CHEPSTOW CHAMPIONSHIP STANDARD OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE
2m 110yds £6,610 (16 declared)

1	111	Mesktill (21) (D) D Nicholson 6-11-10	R Massey (3)
2	1-1	Billy Box (19) (D) G McCourt 5-11-7	D Bridgwater
3	11	Irish Banker (31) (CD) M Pipe 6-11-7	A P McCoy
4	1-1	Kings Measure (47) (D) J Jefferson 4-11-7	E Callaghan
5	21-1	Sunday Venture (53) (D) N Henderson 5-11-7	R Thornton
6	3/1-12	Knock Leader (38) (D) (BF) M Pipe 5-11-4	G Supple
7	1-6	Lewesdon Manor (21) (D) P R Webber 6-11-4	J A McCarthy
8	1	Matchless (182) (D) Lord Huntingdon 4-11-4	P Carberry
9	1	Merry Shot (11) Mrs J Pitman 5-11-4	D Leahy
10	12	Nite Equal (40) (D) M Pipe 4-11-4	C Maude
11	1	Smith's Perk (18) (D) Mrs J Pitman 4-11-4	B Hogan (3)
12	121	Latin Mistress (38) (D) P Nicholls 5-11-2	L Cummins (5)
13	4	Brown Melody (22) Mrs C Johnsey 4-11-0	T Jenks
14	42	Jet Tabs (31) Mrs J Pitman 5-11-0	R Dunwoody
15	1	Westfield Mist (117) (D) P Eccles 5-10-13	D Byrne
16	064	Dunraven Lady (10) D Brace 5-10-9	Miss P Jones

Betting: 7-2 Mesktill, 5-1 Irish Banker, 6-1 Kings Measure, 7-1 Knock Leader, 8-1 Billy Box, Sunday Venture, 10-1 Matchless.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

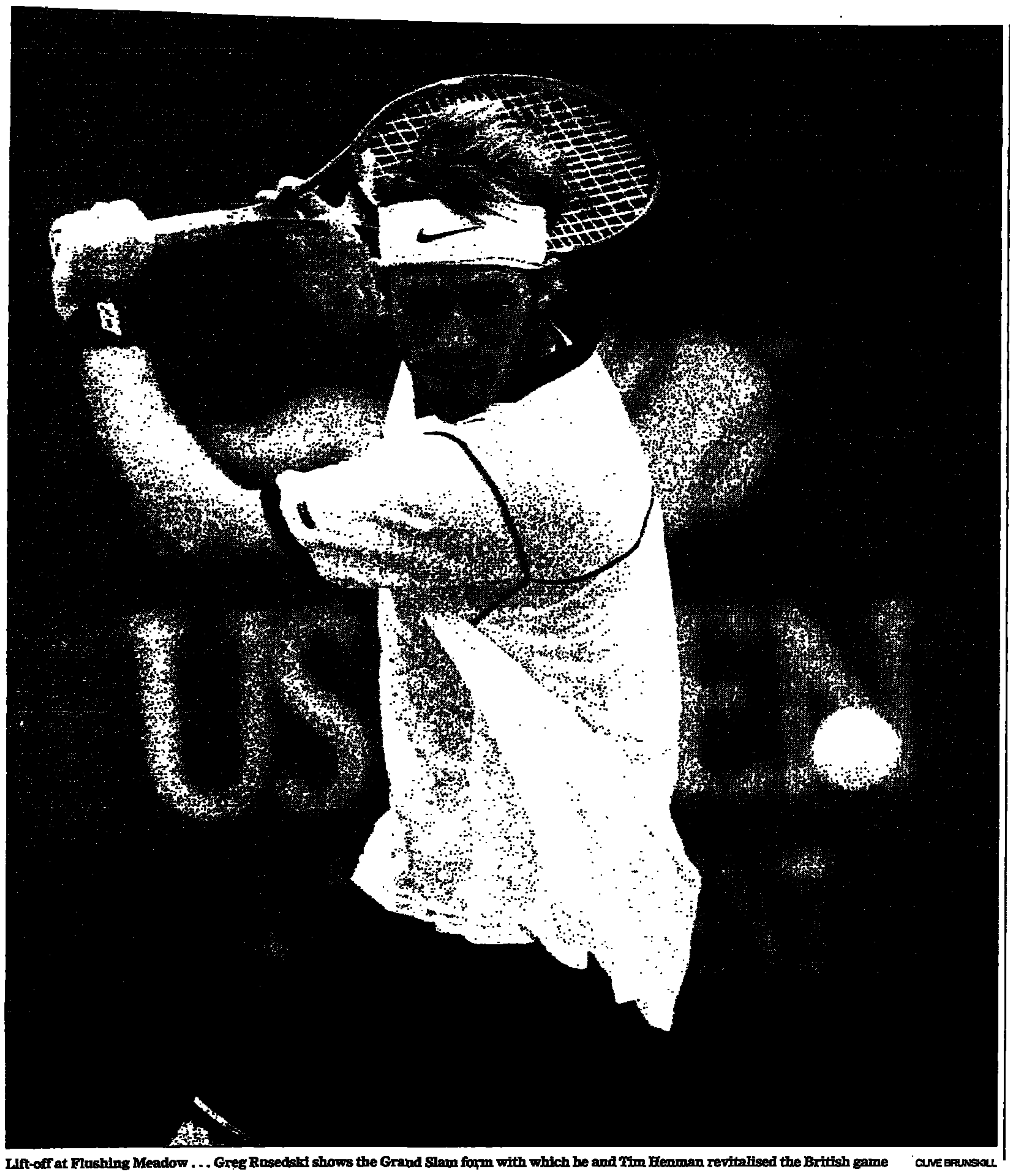
Jockeys	1st	Runs	%	Level St	Trainers	1st	Runs	%	Level St
A P McCoy	29	108	26.9	+2.06	M C Pipe	43	180	23.9	-17.47
R Dunwoody	24	124	19.4	-47.38	P J Hobbs	20	76	26.3	+39.75
D Bridgwater	18	79	22.8	+14.98	N Twiston-Davies	19	109	17.4	-9.12
C Llewellyn	16	97	16.5	-24.24	P F Nicholls	18	75	24.4	-4.06
A Maguire	13	54	24.1	-9.15	D Nicholson	16	61	26.2	-0.51
R Johnson	12	71	16.9	-38.61	Mrs J Pitman	7	37	18.9	+40.50
M A Fitzgerald	11	78	14.1	-25.47	R H Alner	5	36	13.9	-7.50

هكذا من الأصل

1997 — The defining moments

One of Fred Perry's pre-war feats was emulated at last summer's US Open. **Stephen Bierley** continues our series on athletes who enjoyed or endured a watershed 12 months

The year British tennis finally made a return



Lift-off at Flushing Meadow . . . Greg Rusedski shows the Grand Slam form with which he and Tim Henman revitalised the British game CLIVE BRUNSKILL

EVEN as the deceptively simple phrase "the first British player to reach the US Open final since Fred Perry in 1936" was being written in New York last September, the actual towering achievement of Greg Rusedski was almost impossible to put into immediate, let alone historical, perspective because of the death and funeral of Princess Diana.

It has only been during the past few weeks, perhaps, when a whole string of thoroughly merited awards has come Rusedski's way, including the BBC Sports Personality of the Year, that it has become possible to gauge his achievement properly and to realise just how indelibly it had registered with the public.

"What Greg has done is to give everybody else within British tennis the expectation of what is possible," said John Barrett, the doyen of the BBC commentary box.

"If anybody had said 12 months ago that we would have a player in a Grand Slam final, he or she would have needed their head examined. Now the possibilities are limitless.

"It had dawned on me when Greg beat Michael Chang and Andre Agassi back-to-back in the San Jose tournament in February this year that he must have made a tremendous improvement, but nobody was prepared for what happened at the US Open."

Not least Rusedski. He had played there three times previously and lost in the first round on each occasion. The British No. 1 hated the place. It fed his worst insecurities, while the American players, including Pete Sampras, constantly questioned his switch in 1995 from Canada to Britain. The ribbing may have been playful but it rankled.

But what everybody has learned this year is that behind the Rusedski smile lies a will of steel and an implacable determination to succeed.

His first opponent at this year's US Open was David Wheaton, and many believed the American might be his last. "In fact I had dismissed Wheaton," said Barrett. "I saw it as a pretty good draw for Greg." And he was absolutely right.

It was the manner of Rusedski's 6-2, 6-3, 6-3 victory that was so impressive. Some of his running forehands down the line were simply stunning, while his volleys were tighter and crisper than anyone could remember, including Barrett.

"Greg had always seemed to me to be slightly inflexible and unable to play touch shots or angled volleys. Now, suddenly, they were all there. He had worked and worked with Brian Teacher to improve his game, and here was the positive proof."

History in the making

Rusedski rises to the top

South Africa's Marcos Ondruska and Germany's Jens Knippschild were the next to fall and then, in the fourth round, the Czech Daniel Vacek.

Rusedski had reached the quarter-finals at Wimbledon before losing disappointingly to France's Cedric Pioline, the eventual beaten finalist. His opponent at the same stage at Flushing Meadow was Richard Krajicek, the huge-serving Dutchman.

It was no contest. In swirling winds on the new and vast Arthur Ashe Court, Rusedski won 7-5, 7-6, 7-6. "It was then I remember thinking 'My God, he could win the whole thing'," said Barrett.

"In fact, he didn't play all that well against Jonas Bjorkman in the semi-final, but once again he showed tremendous fighting spirit. And, you know, when Greg took the third set in the final against Pat Rafter I really felt he might have won the title. It was very, very close."

Rafter, the hugely likeable Australian, won 6-3, 6-2, 4-6, 7-5, leaving Rusedski, who had suffered a nasty throat infection during the latter stages of the tournament, to express husky expectations of more Grand Slam finals and an ultimate victory.

"Greg is a wonderful example of what can be achieved through ambition, a willingness to work exceptionally hard, the possession of a first-class shot [his serve] and the determination to add things to his game," said Barrett. "And he has done it all with relative weaknesses, done it despite these weaknesses, and striven tremendously hard to improve himself."

The success of both Rusedski and Tim Henman is incalculable. It would be wishful thinking to suppose that British tennis is about to witness a full-blown international revival, but there is no doubt that there is now a real feelgood factor within the sport.

"I first saw this two years ago at the Nationals [the British closed championships] at Telford when Greg was signing autographs and talking to the kids. The whole place was buzzing and he was like the Pied Piper," added Barrett. "We have all seen how the game has changed now that we have got a couple of guys who can play a bit."

The rivalry between Rusedski and Henman is perhaps the greatest driving force of all, for there is no doubt that the long fellow's run to the US Open final stung Henman hugely.

"For a set-and-a-half against Sampras in the Grand Slam Cup semi-final Greg was the best player in the world," added Barrett.

It has been a remarkable year for British tennis, although even now Rusedski's run to the US Open final requires the occasional pinch. "Truly magnificent," said Barrett. It was.

> New York is the city that never sleeps. If Rusedski did manage to sleep before leaving here on Concorde, it is doubtful whether he could have had a dream more improbable than his true-life experience of the past fortnight
>
> **David Powell, The Times**

Leicester card

	RON COX	TOP FORM
1.05	Andsuephi	Andsuephi
1.35	Fair And Fancy	Fair And Fancy
2.05	Wayfarers Way	Wayfarers Way (nap)
2.40	In Truth	Garnwin
3.10	Sharlakanndi	Five Flags
3.40	Torrill House	Coinlosser

Right-handed circuit of 1¾m with 250yds run-in. Stiff test with the last three furlongs uphill.
Going: Hurdles Soft, Chases Good. ★ Denotes blinkers.
Long distance travellers: Millmount (3.10), T McGovern, E Sussex, 156 miles.
Seven day winners: None.
Blinkered first time: None. **Visored:** None.
Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. F,Flat.

1.05 PYTCHLEY NOVICE HURDLE 2m £3,239 (8 declared)

1 11-1 Andsuephi (78) (D) C Brooks 5-11-5 — B Gallagher ●90
2 UPF6- Altbey Blue (252) R Peacock 8-10-12 — S Wynne —
3 Golden Hadeer (F19) M Ryan 6-10-12 — J Ryan —
4 J5 Noble Athlete (54) (BF) Mrs J Pitman 5-10-12 — R Farrant 76
5 Pou Nou Mrs P Sly 4-10-12 — W Marston —
6 04 Urgent Swift (18) M Pitman 4-10-12 — J R Kavanagh 82
7 U0 Funky (14) F Jordan 4-10-7 — J Supple —
8 U6 Needwood Nutkin (17) B Morgan 4-10-7 — B Clifford 82

Betting: 7-4 Andsuephi, 4-1 Urgent Swift, 5-1 Noble Athlete, 13-2 Golden Hadeer, 8-1 Altbey Blue, Funky, 14-1 Pou Nou, Needwood Nutkin.

1.35 HOBY SELLING HURDLE 2m £2,024 (11 declared)

1 P-7344 Eracle Rule (10) (D) N Littmoden 5-11-5 — R Farrant ★ 87
2 15 3F2 Fair And Fancy (18) (CD) Miss M Milligan 6-11-5 — D Gallagher ●90
3 G35 05 Glowing Path (28) (CD) R Hodges 7-11-5 — T Dascombe 81
4 J66UP- Balmoral Princess (283) D McCain 4-11-0 — S Wynne 78
5 3/7715 Challenger Row (16) (D) Mrs L Jewell 7-10-12 — P Henley (3) —
6 Glenrazie (F302) J L Harris 4-10-12 — J Supple —
7 3250-6 King of The Blues (44) J King 5-10-12 — W Marston 76
8 F4535 Royal Hand (21) R Armson 7-10-12 — Mr R Armson ★ 78
9 00 Sailor (28) S Dow 4-10-12 — J R Kavanagh —
10 C588 Tanlyer (11) R Hollinshead 5-10-12 — Gary Lyons 80
11 Risky Lover (F33) T Bill 4-10-7 — P Midgley (3) —

Betting: 3-1 Glowing Path, 7-2 Eracle Rule, 5-1 Fair And Fancy, 6-1 King Of The Blues, 7-1 Royal Hand, Tanlyer, 16-1 Balmoral Princess, Challenger Row, Glenrazie, Sailor, 25-1 Risky Lover.

2.05 QUORN NOVICE HANDICAP CHASE 2m 1f £4,500 (5 declared)

1 112 51 Wayfarers Way (16) (D) N Henderson 5-11-11 — J R Kavanagh ●90
2 01 2P Youbetterbelieveit (28) C Brooks 8-11-10 — M Berry (7) —
3 3U1-25 New Leaf (22) (D) D Gandolfo 5-11-0 — G Upton 78
4 P-5331 Astral Invasion (11) (7lb ex) T Wall 6-10-6 — Gary Lyons ★ 83
5 6352-11 Cosa Fuair (23) K Bailey 7-10-5 — P Henley (3) 78

Betting: 11-10 Wayfarers Way, 3-1 Astral Invasion, 7-2 Youbetterbelieveit, 6-1 New Leaf, 10-1 Cosa Fuair.

2.40 LEICESTERSHIRE SILVER FOX HANDICAP CHASE 2m 4f 110yds £9,520 (9 declared)

1 1125-7 Garnwin (15) (CD) N Henderson 7-11-10 — J R Kavanagh ●90
2 131F7 Jibber The Kibber (638) (CD) Mrs J Pitman 8-11-9 — R Farrant —
3 41-425 Mister Drum (22) (D) M Wilkinson 8-11-7 — W Marston 82
4 3P-31b Shining Light (23) (CD) D Nicholson 8-11-3 — Mr O McPhail (7) 85
5 1?11F9 Distinctive (271) (C) (D) M Wilkinson 8-10-12 — T Lawrence 87
6 F70P7 Falmouth Bay (37) D Sherwood 8-10-11 — G Upton —
7 44 512 Sister Rosza (10) (D) Mrs S Lamyman 9-10-6 — J Magee (3) 87
8 U5-232 In Truth (16) (D) S Gollings 9-10-3 — D Gallagher 89
9 U1 171 Manor Mieo (16) (D) G Fierro 11-10-0 — X Aizpuru (5) ★ 86

Betting: 3-1 Jibber The Kibber, 4-1 Garnwin, 11-2 Mister Drum, Shining Light, 8-1 Distinctive, Sister Rosza, In Truth, Manor Mieo, 12-1 Falmouth Bay.

3.10 HANCOCK HANDICAP HURDLE 2m 4f 110yds £4,120 (9 declared)

1 21384 Ioad (F637) K Comerford 7-12-0 — S Wynne / B Wilkinson (5) ●90
2 11-225 Five Flags (14) Mrs S Smith 9-11-10 — B Gallagher 85
3 4031-5 Grange (21) D Murray Smith 8-11-5 — T Dascombe —
4 5011 14 Dublin Treasure (15) J Neville 5-11-0 — B Clifford 85
5 F44-32 Needwood Poppy (21) B Morgan 9-10-12 — W Marston 84
6 F13224 Signe Wireless (18) (D) T Etherington 8-10-10 — J R Kavanagh ★ —
7 0-53U Green Crusader (580) Mrs V Ward 6-10-10 — M Batchelor (7) ★ 84
8 1P-4411 Millmount (11) T McGovern 7-10-7 — D J Kavanagh (5) 82
9 7450-5 Sharlakanndi (14) J King 5-10-4 — [illegible]

Betting: 3-1 Five Flags, 5-1 Grange, Needwood Poppy, Millmount, 13-2 Dublin Treasure, Signe Wireless, 8-1 Ioad.

3.40 GALLOWTREE HANDICAP HURDLE 2m £2,987 (8 declared)

1 374315 Coinlosser (19) (CD) (BF) K Morgan 4-12-0 — P Morris (5) ●90
2 1-0314 Torrill House (23) W Musson 5-11-4 — D Gallagher 86
3 100/6 Eben Al Habeeb (16) D McCain 6-11-3 — T Dascombe 86
4 45-011 Dusdrezderdiwnwa (16) R Hodges 7-11-0 — R Farrant ★ —
5 04/1/6 Vasilier (16) (CD) S Gollings 9-10-12 — J Magee (3) 81
6 P-6523 Carrolls Rock (16) C Mann 8-10-3 — J Walsh (7) —
7 7P-306 Saltsong (9) (CD) J Wave 8-10-2 — J R Kavanagh —
8 EGUP-0 Zaaif (16) P Howling 5-10-0

Betting: 11-4 Dusdrezderdiwnwa, 7-2 Torrill House, 4-1 Coinlosser, 11-2 Carrolls Rock, 8-1 Vasilier, Saltsong, 12-1 Eben Al Habeeb.

Wetherby programme

	RON COX	TOP FORM
1.00	Bamburgh Boy	Bamburgh Boy
1.30	Broadwater Boy	Dawn Mission
2.00	Ardrina	Campaign (nb)
2.35	Ask Tom	Ask Tom
3.05	Greville Again	Sounds Fyne
3.35	The Butterwick Kid	Tabriz

Left-handed circuit of 1½m with 200yds run-in which is slightly uphill. A fair course which suits the long-striding galloper.
Going: Soft. ★ Denotes blinkers.
Long distance travellers: Claire's Dancer (3.35), A Turnell, Oxon, 192 miles; Viking Flagship (2.35) & Greville Again (3.05), D Nicholson, Glos, 163 miles.
Seven day winners: None.
Blinkered first time: None. **Visored:** None.
Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing. F,Flat.

1.00 BRADFORD JUVENILE HURDLE 3YO 2m £3,127 (9 declared)

1 5 Bamburgh Boy (28) T Easterby 10-12 — L Wyer ●90
2 Farhan (F297) K Morgan 10-12 — A S Smith —
3 0 In The Genes (23) I Williams 10-12 — R Johnson 87
4 Lockslit (F46) A Smith 10-12 — [illegible] (7) —
5 55 Lyzaax (26) J Howard Johnson 10-12 — D Parker 82
6 40 Mysouls (15) P Hiatt 10-12 — E Husband (3) 88
7 Nonnon Conquest (F84) M Hammond 10-12 — R Garritty —
8 4 Salkobanco (F87) N Waggott 10-12 — M Foster 78
9 26 The Real Mccoy (38) (BF) Mrs J Ramsden 10-12 — D Thomas (7) 89

Betting: 6-4 Bamburgh Boy, 5-1 The Real McCoy, 6-1 Farhan, 8-1 Nonnon Conquest, 10-1 In The Genes, Lyzaax, 14-1 Salkobanco.

1.30 HARRY WHARTON NOVICE HANDICAP CHASE 2m 4f 110yds £3,602 (6 declared)

1 0-251F Dawn Mission (21) (C) (D) (BF) T Easterby 5-11-10 — L Wyer ★ ●90
2 F1/331 Minster Glory (18) (6lb ex) (C) M W Easterby 8-11-7 — R Johnson 88
3 353-01 Desert Brave (14) Mrs S Smith 7-10-13 — G F Ryan (5) 87
4 30-535 Danbys Gorse (28) (CD) J Jefferson 5-10-12 — B Storey 86
5 468/4F Organ Recital (8) D Brennan 8-10-11 — M Brennan —
6 3868/2 Broadwater Boy (41) M Hammond 9-10-9 — Mr C Bonner (5) 84

Betting: 2-1 Dawn Mission, 11-4 Minster Glory, 7-2 Desert Brave, 7-1 Danbys Gorse, Broadwater Boy, 8-1 Organ Recital.

2.00 LONG MARSTON HANDICAP HURDLE 2m 7f £4,903 (8 declared)

1 2111/2 Great Easeby (12) (D) W Storey 7-11-11 — R McGrath (3) 88
2 1211-0 Ice At The Top (35) J Turner 5-11-8 — R Supple 88
3 /30-12 Campaign (14) (D) M Hammond 6-11-0 — R Garritty ●90
4 25530- Bally Boy (281) T Easterby 5-10-13 — L Wyer 88
5 62114- Ardrina (248) F Murphy 8-10-12 — Mr S Durack (5) 82
6 F4210/ Lethal Cocktail (886) (BF) J Howard Johnson 8-10-9 — A S Smith —
7 13/458 Hit The Canvas (14) (C) (D) Mrs M Reveley 6-10-3 — G Lee 80
8 21-330 Dockmaster (17) (BF) Miss M Milligan 6-10-0 — C McCormack (5) 87

Betting: 5-2 Great Easeby, 3-1 Campaign, 9-2 Ardrina, 6-1 Ice At The Top, Dockmaster, 8-1 Hit The Canvas, 10-1 Bally Boy, 16-1 Lethal Cocktail.

2.35 CASTLEFORD CHASE 2m £18,640 (5 declared)

1 124-P1 Ask Tom (21) (D) T Tate 8-11-10 — R Garritty ●90
2 31-355 Down The Fell (35) (CD) J Howard Johnson 8-11-10 — A S Smith 77
3 33-122 Viking Flagship (21) (CD) D Nicholson 10-11-10 — R Johnson 88
4 2624-2 Lord Dorcet (7) (CD) J Charlton 7-11-0 — B Storey 82
5 23-313 Native Mission (14) (CD) J FitzGerald 10-11-0 — L Wyer 80

Betting: 11-8 Ask Tom, 6-4 Viking Flagship, 9-2 Lord Dorcet, 12-1 Down The Fell, 14-1 Native Mission.

3.05 APPLETON ROEBUCK NOVICE CHASE 3m 1f £3,678 (7 declared)

1 5012/1 Sounds Fyne (28) J FitzGerald 8-11-5 — R Garritty ●90
2 4P/444 Ermine Street (35) D Brennan 9-11-0 — M Brennan —
3 0022/3 Feels Like Gold (21) G Richards 9-11-0 — B Harding 78
4 2011/P Greville Again (28) (D) D Nicholson 8-11-0 — R Johnson —
5 P323/4 Over The Corrib (16) J Curtis 7-11-0 — J Callaghan 78
6 24PP-P Share Options (57) (C) (D) (BF) T Easterby 6-11-0 — L Wyer —
7 7/6503 Sal Fosso (16) Mrs S Smith 5-10-13 — G F Ryan (5) 75

Betting: 11-10 Sounds Fyne, 5-2 Feels Like Gold, 11-2 Greville Again, 8-1 Share Options, 12-1 Ermine Street, Over The Corrib, 33-1 Sal Fosso.

3.35 BRAMHAM NOVICE HANDICAP HURDLE 2m £2,898 (10 declared)

1 4-21 The Butterwick Kid (17) (D) R Fahey 4-12-0 — L Wyer 89
2 32-5 Forever Noble (14) M Hammond 4-11-8 — R Garritty 80
3 5-2155 Thunderpoint (16) T Easterby 5-11-8 — J Callaghan 84
4 2-1223 Chinn King (25) (B) (BF) J FitzGerald 6-11-2 — F Leahy (3) 86
5 0-3164 Claire's Dancer (54) (D) A Turnell 4-11-1 — C Rae (7) 83
6 -23233 Soldier Mak (13) J Mackie 4-10-10 — E Husband (3) 86
7 02-51 Tabriz (15) (D) P Aldmen 4-10-8 — O Pears ●90
8 00/244 Key Grip (90) Mrs S Smith 6-10-5 — G F Ryan (5) 83
9 5-3P01 Dan De Man (12) (7lb ex) (D) Miss L Siddall 6-10-0 — M Foster 83
10 D5-00 Pablo Way (18) N Chamberlain 7-10-0 — L O'Hara 77

Betting: 3-1 The Butterwick Kid, 9-2 Dan De Man, 6-1 Tabriz, 7-1 Forever Noble, Chinn King, Key Grip, 8-1 Thunderpoint, Soldier Mak.

Results

KEMPTON

12.40 (2m Hdle): 1, ERINTANTE, Mr T Doumen (9-1); **2, Better Offer** (7-1); **3, Shabrur** (13-2). 4-6 fav Zaralaska. 7 ran. 12, hd. (F Doumen, Fr.) Tote: £13.00; £3.50 £1.90. DF: £53.40 CSF: £57.44.
1.10 (3m Ch): 1, FIDDLING THE FACTS, M A Fitzgerald (5-2); **2, Forest Ivory** (9-4 fav); **3, Ottowa** (4-1). 6 ran 6, 6. (N Henderson) Tote: £3.00; £1.40, £2.30. Dual F: £4.20. CSF: £7.54. NR: Bengers Moor
1.45 (2m Hdle): 1, SERENUS, M A Fitzgerald (11-4 jt-fav); **2, Tibetan** (11-4 jt-fav); **3, Kingsfold Pet** (11-2). 7 ran. 2½, 18. (N Henderson) Tote: £3.40; £2.10, £2.10. Dual F: £4.20. CSF: £9.59. Tricast: £32.94. NR: Bless Me Sister.
2.20 (3m Ch): 1, SEE MORE BUSINESS, A Thornton (10-1); **2, Challenger du Luc** (18-1); **3, Rough Quest** (11-2). 9-4 jt-fav One Man, Sunny Bay. 8 ran. 2, 10. (P Nicholls) Tote: £10.90; £1.90, £2.30, £1.60. Dual F: £33.60. Trio: £56.00. CSF. £125.40. NR: Yorkshire Gale.
2.55 (2m Ch): 1, KADASTROF, A Thornton (9-4); **2, Lake Kariba** (6-4 fav); **3, Zabadi** (5-1). 5 ran. 2½, 17. (R Dickin) Tote: £3.60; £1.90, £1.20. Dual F: £1.90. CSF: £5.82. NR: Intermagic.
3.25 (2m 110yds Hdle): 1, HAILE DERRING, C Llewellyn (8-1); **2, Toby Brown** (5-1); **3, Decyborg** (11-1). 5-4 fav Friendship. 6 ran. 5, dist. (N Twiston-Davies) Tote: £11.50; £3.60, £2.00. Dual F: £24.40. CSF: £43.30.
JACKPOT: £56,415, £71,512 carried over
PLACEPOT: £532.10. **QUADPOT:** £60.70.

AYR

12.55 (2m Hdle): 1, FORZAIR, R McGrath (7-2); **2, Ballegio** (7-4 fav); **3, Parson's Lodge** (11-2). 10 ran. 3, 3. (J O'Neill) Tote: £3.30; £1.10, £1.50, £2.10. Dual F: £4.50. Trio: £2.20. CSF: £8.18. Tricast: £25.52.
1.25 (2m Ch): 1, WELSH MARCH, J Callaghan (6-5 fav); **2, La Riviera** (10-1); **3, Citadeo** (7-2). 8 ran. 11, 1¾. (G Moore) Tote: £1.80; £1.10, £4.00, £2.20. Dual F: £9.00. Trio: £21.30. DF: £11.39. NR: Ham N'Eggs.
2.00 (2m 4f Hdle): 1, EASBY JOKER, R McGrath (8-1); **2, Tindles Bible** (25-1); **3, Polar King** (9-2). 7-4 fav Hopeful Lord. 7 ran. 1¾, 7. (S Kettlewell) Tote: £12.70; £3.50, £5.20. Dual F: £76.10. CSF: £102.84.
2.35 (3m 1f Ch): 1, JUDICIOUS CAPTAIN, Mr C Storey (7-2); **2, Seeking Gold** (7-2); **3, Peter** (10-1). 3-1 fav Naughty Future. 7 ran. 3, 6. (Mrs J Storey) Tote: £5.80; £3.10, £1.70. Dual F: £7.00. CSF: £14.71.
3.10 (2m 4f Ch): 1, RACHAEL'S OWEN, R McGrath (6-1); **2, True Scot** (10-1); **3, Solsgirth** (6-4 fav). 6 ran. 3, 11. (J Goldie) T: £6.30; £2.10, £2.20. DF: £14.10. CSF: £45.81.
3.40 (2m 4f): 1, PALACEGATE KING, S Taylor (5-2); **2, Rossel** (6-4 Fav); **3, Bells Hill Lad** (14-1). 5 ran. 1, 6. (A Whillans) Tote: £3.40; £2.20, £1.70. Dual F: £3.20. CSF: £6.26.
QUADPOT: £164.80. **PLACEPOT:** £541.40.

HEREFORD

12.35 (2m 3f 110yds Hdle): 1, SHORE PARTY, T Jenks (11-4 fav); **2, Builder Boy** (11-2); **3, Saras Delight** (5-1). 13 ran. 4, 9. (N Twiston-Davies) Tote: £4.80; £2.10, £1.80, £2.40. Dual F: £9.80. CSF: £18.29. NR: Gallant Taffy, Oyster Delight, Western Sun.
1.05 (2m 3f 110yds Hdle): 1, THE VILLAGE WAY, S Wynne (6-6 fav); **2, Latchford** (20-1); **3, Ballox** (33-1). 14 ran. 21, 1¾. (Miss Venetia Williams) Tote: £2.10; £1.30, £6.60, £5.40. Dual F: £29.40. CSF: £25.24. NR: Drama King, Mr Lambrini.
1.35 (3m 2f Hdle): 1, WEATHER WISE, J R Kavanagh (5-2 fav); **2, St Mellion Leisure** (5-1); **3, Just For A Reason** (7-1). 7 ran. 6, ¾. (W Turner) Tote: £3.20; £1.60, £3.20. Dual F: £14.70. CSF: £14.50. Tricast: £70.04. NR: The Cheese Baron.
2.05 (2m 3f Ch): 1, WINNOW, J Culloty (3-1); **2, Can't Say** (9-2); **3, The Crooked Oak** (10-1). 9-4 fav Raphael Bodine. 8 ran. 5, 30. (Miss H Knight) Tote: £3.70; £1.60, £1.30, £2.90. Dual F: £4.60. CSF: £17.46. Tricast: £115.11. NR: Super Ritchart, Wayfarers Way.
2.35 (2m 3f 110yds Hdle): 1, HIGH LOW, Miss E J Jones (10-1); **2, Caracol** (2-1 fav); **3, Lord Nitrogen** (7-2). 11 ran. 9, 4. (I Jones) T: £15.90; £3.00, £1.30, £1.60. DF: £20.80. CSF: £30.29. Tricast: £84.42. NR: Lime Street Blues, Secret Gin, The Brewer.
3.05 (3m 1f 110yds Ch): 1, FREDDIE MUCK, T Jenks (13-8 fav); **2, Hopperdante** (14-1); **3, First Harvest** (16-1). 12 ran. Dist. 3½. (N Twiston-Davies) Tote: £2.70; £1.70, £2.40, £2.20. Dual F: £24.30. CSF: £27.35.
3.35 (2m 1f Hdle): 1, STUDIO THIRTY, X Aizpuru (2-1 fav); **2, Distant Storm** (7-2); **3, Blaze of Song** (7-2). 10 ran. 1¾, 2. (R Dickin) Tote: £3.40; £1.50, £2.10, £1.60. Dual F: £3.30. CSF: £10.66. Tricast: £24.31. NR: Don't Tell Tom, Mr Goonhilly.
PLACEPOT: £56.80. **QUADPOT:** £9.20.

HUNTINGDON

12.30 (2m 4f 110yds Ch): 1, MUSIC THERAPY, J A McCarthy (3-1); **2, Harlequin Chorus** (4-1); **3, The Toiseach** (5-2 fav). 8 ran. 11, 5. (T Forster) Tote: £4.50; £1.30, £1.60, £1.50. Dual F: £16.10. CSF: £15.42. NR: Inch Champion.
1.00 (2m 4f 110yds Ch): 1, OCCOLD, Michael Brennan (7-2); **2, Fireaprey** (5-1); **3, Garethson** (3-1 fav). 10 ran. 1¾, 22. (G Hubbard) Tote: £3.90; £1.40, £1.60, £1.60. Dual F: £5.00. CSF: £18.55.
1.30 (2m 5f 110yds Hdle) 1, ERNEST WILLIAM, Michael Brennan (7-4 fav); **2, Master Dancer** (40-1); **3, The Brewer** (7-2). 13 ran. 14, 1¾. (G Hubbard) Tote: £3.30; £1.70, £8.30, £1.80. DF: £60.20. CSF: £86.25. Tricast: £242.74. NR: Slightly Special.
2.00 (3m Ch): 1, OCEAN LEADER, J F Titley (4-1); **2, Karenastino** (6-1); **3, High Learie** (5-2). 2-1 fav Gems Lad. 7 ran. 1¾, dist. (Mrs D Haine) Tote: £5.60; £2.80, £3.40. Dual F: £18.50. CSF: £27.26. Tricast: £67.18. NR: Black Statement, Pavlova, Some Day Soon, Wot No Gin.
2.30 (2m 2f Hdle): 1, EDMOND, R Thornton (5-4 fav); **2, Benny Hill Lad** (5-1); **3, Physical Fun** (12-1). 15 ran. 14, 8. (T Forster) Tote: £3.00; £1.60, £2.40, £3.30. Dual F: £9.90. CSF: £10.40.
3.00 (2m 110yds Ch): 1, DAYS OF THUNDER, B Clifford (12-1); **2, Fenwick's Brother** (11-8 fav); **3, Sleazey** (7-2) 5 ran. 5, dist. (Mrs S Odell) Tote: £11.70; £3.20, £1.40. Dual F: £6.80. CSF: £29.66. Tricast: £58.30. NR: Alcove, Auburn Boy.
3.30 (2m 110yds): 1, RUNNING WATER, M Richards (5-1); **2, In The Van** (5-1); **3, Summerquer** (7-2 jt-fav). 7-2 jt-fav Hulk. 18 ran. 7, 7. (P Hedger) Tote: £12.90; £3.30, £1.80, £2.70. Dual F: £78.60. CSF: £37.90. NR: Jet Specials
PLACEPOT: £21.70. **QUADPOT:** £12.70.

MARKET RASEN

12.30 (2m 1f 110yds Hdle): 1, TUDOR FALCON, D Parker (25-1); **2, Thomas Crown** (8-4 fav); **3, African Sun** (7-2). 7 ran. 7, 2¾. (P Bradley) Tote: £36.40; £9.20, £1.70. Dual F: £98.30. CSF: £80.17. Tricast: £238.31. NR: Brandon Bridge, Oakbury.
1.00 (3m 1f Ch): 1, BASSENHALLY, W Marston (9-4); **2, Market Gossip** (7-4 fav); **3, Dandy des Plauts** (12-1). 8 ran. 7, 4. (Mrs P Sly) Tote: £3.50; £1.80, £1.40, £3.10. Dual F: £2.30. CSF: £7.32. Tricast: £38.25. NR: Pearl's Choice, Sirerie.
1.35 (4m 1f Ch): 1, CERIDWEN, W Worthington (3-1); **2, Master Boston** (4-1); **3, Price's Hill** (7-4 fav) 5 ran. 28, dist. (T Greathead) Tote: £4.20; £1.70, £1.70. Dual F: £7.90. CSF: £15.22. NR: Cala Rua, Woodlands Genhire.
2.05 (2m 3f 110yds Hdle): 1, COLOUR CODE, J Supple (4-5 fav); **2, Ferrers** (4-1); **3, Donnybrook** (8-1). 12 ran. 11, 3. (Mrs A Swinbank) Tote: £2.60; £1.70, £1.60, £2.00. Dual F: £3.10. CSF: £4.66. NR: Cottage Craft.
2.35 (2m 3f 110yds Hdle): 1, LETS BE FRANK, D Finnegan (5-2); **2, Dana Point** (2-1 jt-fav); **3, Nattagrity** (2-1 jt-fav). 5 ran. ¾. 12. (Noel T Chance) Tote: £2.90; £1.60, £1.60. Dual F: £2.60. CSF: £7.95. NR: Marchant Ming.
3.05 (2m 1f 110yds Ch): 1, TEJANO GOLD, W Marston (8-11 fav); **2, Nen Vintage** (9-4); **3, Cheeks** (5-1). 4 ran. 1¾, 24. (P Bradley) T: £1.60. DF: £1.70. CSF: £2.83.
3.35 (2m 1f 110yds Hdle): 1, BAHER, Miss R Clark (4-1); **2, Shark** (7-2); **3, Lord Hastie** (5-1). 9-4 fav Sally's Twins. 10 ran. ¾, 1¾. (S Clark) Tote: £5.10; £1.40, £1.60, £1.80. DF: £10.90. CSF: £19.78. NR: Carrolls Rock, Forget Paris, Katatonic, Steam On.
PLACEPOT: £24.70. **QUADPOT:** £17.50.

SEDGEFIELD

1.00 (3m 3f 110yds Hdle): 1, BIRKDALE, R Supple (10-11 fav); **2, For Cathal** (7-4); **3, Kalasadi** (11-2). 7 ran. 2, 30. (L Lungo) Tote: £2.10; £1.70, £1.50. Dual F: £1.90. CSF: £2.55.
1.30 (3m 3f Ch): 1, SIRERIC, K Johnson (9-2 co-fav); **2, Tudor Fellow** (9-2 co-fav); **3, Kibby Bank** (6-1). 9-2 co-fav Dark Oak. 10 ran. 15, 28. (S Bell) Tote: £4.00; £1.60, £1.80, £1.90. Dual F: £5.80. CSF. £24.05. Tricast: £145.77. NR: Rye Crossing.
2.00 (2m 5f Ch): 1, CHIPPED OUT, C McCormack (7-4 jt-fav); **2, Callernoy** (66-1); **3, River Challenge** (7-1). 7-4 jt-fav Executive Design. 13 ran. 3, 20. (Martin Todhunter) Tote: £3.20; £1.50, £10.40, £1.50. Dual F: £275.80. CSF: £167.79.
2.30 (2m 110yds Ch): 1, MARBLE MAN, D Bentley (3-1 co-fav); **2, Val de Rama** (3-1 co-fav); **3, Xaipete** (3-1 co-fav). 6 ran. 6, 22. (M Pallf) Tote: £4.40; £2.10, £1.70. Dual F: £7.00. CSF: £12.08. Tricast: £26.00. NR: Kildrummy Castle, Shultan, Uk Hygiene.
3.00 (2m 5f 110yds Hdle): 1, TOSHIBA TALK, C McCormack (9-4 fav); **2, Stylish Interval** (8-1); **3, Topothenorthracing** (8-1). 12 ran. 5, 11. (B Ellison) Tote: £2.90; £1.70, £2.20, £1.80. Dual F: £15.80. CSF: £16.29. Tricast: £88.41.
3.30 (2m 1f Hdle): 1, QUANGO, F Leahy (5-1); **2, General's Orders** (7-2); **3, Diamond Beach** (9-2). 3-1 fav Fatehalkhair. 8 ran. 25, ¾. (J FitzGerald) Tote: £7.90; £2.10, £1.10, £1.40. Dual F: £9.80. CSF: £21.82. Tricast: £77.51.
PLACEPOT: £40.40. **QUADPOT:** £15.40.

WETHERBY

12.45 (2m 4f 110yds): 1, ARDENT SCOUT, N Bentley (11-1). **2, Mesayer** (16-1); **3, Glenbower** (4-1). 7-4 fav Joe Shaw. 13 ran. 5, 4. (Mrs S Smith) Tote: £18.30; £3.80, £4.80, £1.80. DF: £165.40. Trio: £151.20. CSF: £159.87. Tricast: £770.24.
1.15 (2m Ch): 1, HAM N'EGGS, R Garritty (4-5 fav); **2, Jolly Heart** (11-4); **3, Abbeyjaybee** (16-1). 4 ran. 19, dist. (M Hammond) Tote: £1.70; Dual F: £1.90. CSF: £2.75. NR: Kadastrof, Shining Edge.
1.50 (2m Hdle): 1, NEW INN, Mr S Durack (5-2); **2, House of Dreams** (4-1); **3, Samanid** (11-1). 6-4 fav Dr Bones. 5 ran. 1¾, 30. (S Gollings) Tote: £3.50; £1.70, £1.70. Dual F: £8.70. CSF: £11.80. NR: Kaltak.
2.25 (3m 1f Ch): 1, STRATH ROYAL, M Brennan (3-1); **2, Major Bell** (9-2); **3, Sparky Gayle** (9-4). 13-8 fav Colonel In Chief. 4 ran. 13, dist. (O Brennan) T: £3.30. DF: £10.00. CSF: £13.52. NR: Avro Anson.
2.55 (2m 4f 110yds Ch): 1, CUMBRIAN CHALLENGE, L Wyer (5-4 fav); **2, Brambleberry** (11-2); **3, Northants** (12-1). 6 ran. 5, 5. (T Easterby) Tote: £1.90; £1.60, £1.20. Dual F: £3.40. CSF: £8.71.
3.25 (2m Hdle): 1, JUSTIN MAC, P Carberry (5-2); **2, Foundry Lane** (4-5 fav); **3, Hob Express** (12-1). 15 ran. ¾, 24. (J FitzGerald) Tote: £4.20; £1.70, £1.40, £3.50. Dual F: £3.10. Trio: £10.90. CSF: £5.33. NR: Florentino, Lord Hastie.
PLACEPOT: £41.00. **QUADPOT:** £10.00.

WINCANTON

12.50 (2m Hdle): 1, POTTER AGAIN, R Johnson (11-8 fav); **2, Kentford Tina** (12-1); **3, Kiamzhuta** (8-1). 13 ran. 2. 16. (D Nicholson) Tote: £2.50; £1.60, £4.20, £2.00. Dual F: £16.80. Trio. £40.10. CSF: £15.89.
1.20 (2m Ch): 1, ROBINS PRIDE, G Tormey (11-1); **2, Merstock** (13-2); **3, The Carrot Man** (9-1). 6-4 fav Storm Run. 8 ran. 6, 4. (C Popham) Tote: £13.10; £2.60, £1.60, £1.20. Dual F: £31.50. CSF: £68.97. Tricast: £607.94.
1.55 (2m 5f Ch): 1, WAYWARD KING, T Dascombe (14-1); **2, Northern Starlight** (2-1); **3, Glitter Isle** (15-8 fav). 6 ran. (R Hodges) Tote: £16.50; £3.00, £1.80. Dual F: £12.30. CSF: £40.71. Non Runner Amlah.
2.30 (2m 6f Hdle): 1, BUCKHOUSE BOY, R Johnson (11-1); **2, Nono Stirred** (100-30); **3, Ivor's Flutter** (3-1 fav). 10 ran. Nk, 7. (D Nicholson) Tote: £10.30; £2.90, £1.40, £1.50. Dual F: £19.10. Trio: £56.60. CSF: £45.11. Tricast: £129.37. NR: Amazon Express, Mutanassib, Olympian, Sheriff.
3.00 (3m 1f 110yds Ch): 1, BRAVE HIGHLANDER, P Hide (5-1); **2, Danger Baby** (100-30); **3, Linton Rocks** (11-4 jt-fav) 11-4 jt-fav Jultara. 6 ran. ¾, 1¾. (J Gifford) Tote: £8.40; £2.40, £1.90. Dual F: £11.40. CSF: £19.96. NR: Sunley Bay.
3.30 (2m Hdle): 1, CATEMPO, A Bates (13-2). **2, Song of Kenda** (20-1); **3, Mr Darcy** (5-2 fav). 9 ran. 8, ¾ (G McCourt) Tote: £9.80; £2.40, £5.40, £1.30. Dual F: £89.10. Trio: £105.60. CSF: £99.07 Tricast: £355.35. NR: Bet Wiltshire, Fabulous Mtoto, Milford Sound, Negative Equity. Welton Arsenal.
PLACEPOT: £53.20. **QUADPOT:** £8.80.

WOLVERHAMPTON

1.15: 1, DOUBLE-O, J Quinn (4-1 fav); **2, Ramsey Hope** (6-1); **3, Mike's Double** (9-2). 8 ran. 1¾, 1. (W Jarvis) Tote £4.90; £2.20, £3.00, £1.50. Dual F: £27.50. CSF: £25.66. Tricast: £94.74
1.40: 1, AHLIYAT, W Ryan (4-1); **2, Other Club** (6-1); **3, Patina** (20-1) 10-11 fav Fayik. 6 ran. 1¾, ¾. (J Hills) Tote: £4.30; £2.40, £3.20. Dual F: £11.90 CSF: £25.76.
2.15: 1, TOUCHANOVA, J Quinn (8-1); **2, Consoutefivelog** (14-1); **3, Just For Tina** (11-1). 3-1 jt-fav Night Auction 7 ran. 2¾, hd (G Margarson) Tote: £6.30; £3.60, £4.00. Dual F: £25.60. Trio: £45.90. CSF: £40.27. Frolicking (3-1) withdrawn not under orders, Rule 4, deduct 25p in £. Stravsea (10/1) withdrawn, Rule 4, deduct 5p in £.
2.45: 1, REDOUBTABLE, A Culhane (3-1 fav); **2, Eastern Prophets** (9-2); **3, Elite Hope** (4-1). 8 ran. ¾, 1¾. (D Chapman) Tote: £5.00; £1.90, £1.70, £1.60. Dual F: £18.30. CSF: £16.11. Tricast: £51.71.
3.15: 1, LIONIZE, W Ryan (4-1); **2, Democrat** (2-1 fav); **3, Queen's Pageant** (25-1). 9 ran. 1¾, 3¾. (Mrs J Cecil) Tote: £6.30; £1.80, £1.40, £4.60. Dual F: £5.40. Trio: £36.20. CSF: £10.42. Tricast: £146.62.
3.50: 1, REX MUNDI, A McCarthy (5-4 fav); **2, Red Phantom** (10-1); **3, Sidney The Kidney** (14-1). 8 ran. Nk, 6. (P Evans) Tote: £2.50; £1.10, £2.50, £2.30. Dual F. £12.10. Trio: £41.80. CSF: £16.35. NR: Tabasco Jazz.
4.20: 1, COLINS CHOICE, P Bradley (7-1); **2, Mazzy Bay** (7-4 fav); **3, Xenophon of Cunaxa** (25-1). 11 ran. 1. 1¾. (J Spearing) Tote: £7.00; £2.00, £1.70, £7.80. Dual F: £11.30. Trio: £241.70. CSF: £20.64. Tricast: £301.04.
4.50: 1, MAZEED, A McCarthy (9-4 fav); **2, Chadleigh Lane** (10-1); **3, Quesstionaire** (5-1). 9 ran. 6, ¾. (P Evans) Tote. £5.10; £2.00, £1.70, £1.50. Dual F: £23.60. Trio: £7.80. CSF: £23.45. Tricast: £92.00. NR: Principal Boy.
PLACEPOT: £595.70. **QUADPOT:** £37.10.
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The Guardian INTERACTIVE

Rugby Union

Premiership One

Saracens 21, Leicester 22

Stransky subdues Saracens

Robert Armstrong

LEICESTER, strong-willed and streetwise, restored their credibility as title contenders with a shrewdly-orchestrated victory over the Premiership leaders in front of a record home crowd of 14,291 at Vicarage Road yesterday. Joel Stransky, the Tigers' Springbok fly-half, ended Saracens' 100 per cent league record with a spectacular 80th-minute drop goal that left him with 17 points for the afternoon.

Saracens, who twice fell behind in the opening hour, appeared to have done enough to win with two exciting long-range tries in the final 15 minutes by Ryan Constable and Richard Wallace that gave them a five-point lead. Despite the setback, Francois Pienaar's ambitious side still lead the Premiership by two points though second-placed Newcastle, who have two games in hand, are poised to take over as front-runners.

"It was a fiery, competitive game and luckily no one was sent off," said a disappointed Pienaar afterwards. "We didn't win enough ball from our line-outs — we didn't do enough to win the game."

The referee Ed Morrison had his work cut out to keep track of numerous acts of violence: at one stage, he held a lengthy consultation with a touch judge before issuing yellow cards to the England locks, Martin Johnson and Danny Grewcock, for brawling.

When the respective fly-halves, Stransky and Michael Lynagh did manage to release their pacy three-quarters players, Wallace and Leicester's Austin Healey tended to show their opponents a clean pair of heels.

In the first quarter, seasonal goodwill was conspicuous by its absence as forwards from both sides eyeballed and niggled each other like playground deliquents.

An early exchange of penalty goals between Lynagh and Stranksy did nothing to bring composure to an overheated contest and cried out for playmakers willing to make the ball do most of the work. Players knocking on or standing offside allowed the respective goal kickers to land another penalty apiece midway through the half and Lynagh dropped a crisp 30-metre goal from quick ruck ball on the half-hour.

Leicester stepped up the pace within seconds of the restart and when Pienaar detached early from a scrum inside the Saracens' 22, Stransky levelled the scores with a short penalty. That was the signal for a far more cohesive onslaught by Leicester, whose new-found cutting edge was rewarded with a 55th-minute try by Fritz Van Heerden.

Stransky cleverly tested Sarries' defence with a teasing high kick into the right corner. Showing a nice sense of timing, the Tigers' big South African lock peeled away from a ruck at the critical moment, catching the hosts by surprise as he rumbled over.

However, Saracens suddenly began to move the ball wide with renewed urgency, something they had failed to do most of the afternoon. With 13 minutes left, the Australian centre Constable accepted a slick pass from Lynagh before setting off on a long, mazy run through the Leicester defence that culminated in a superb try in the right corner.

Next it was the turn of Saracens' Irish wing Wallace, who sprinted 40 metres to score to the right of the posts. Lynagh failed to convert, a miss that proved very costly despite his side's 21–16 lead.

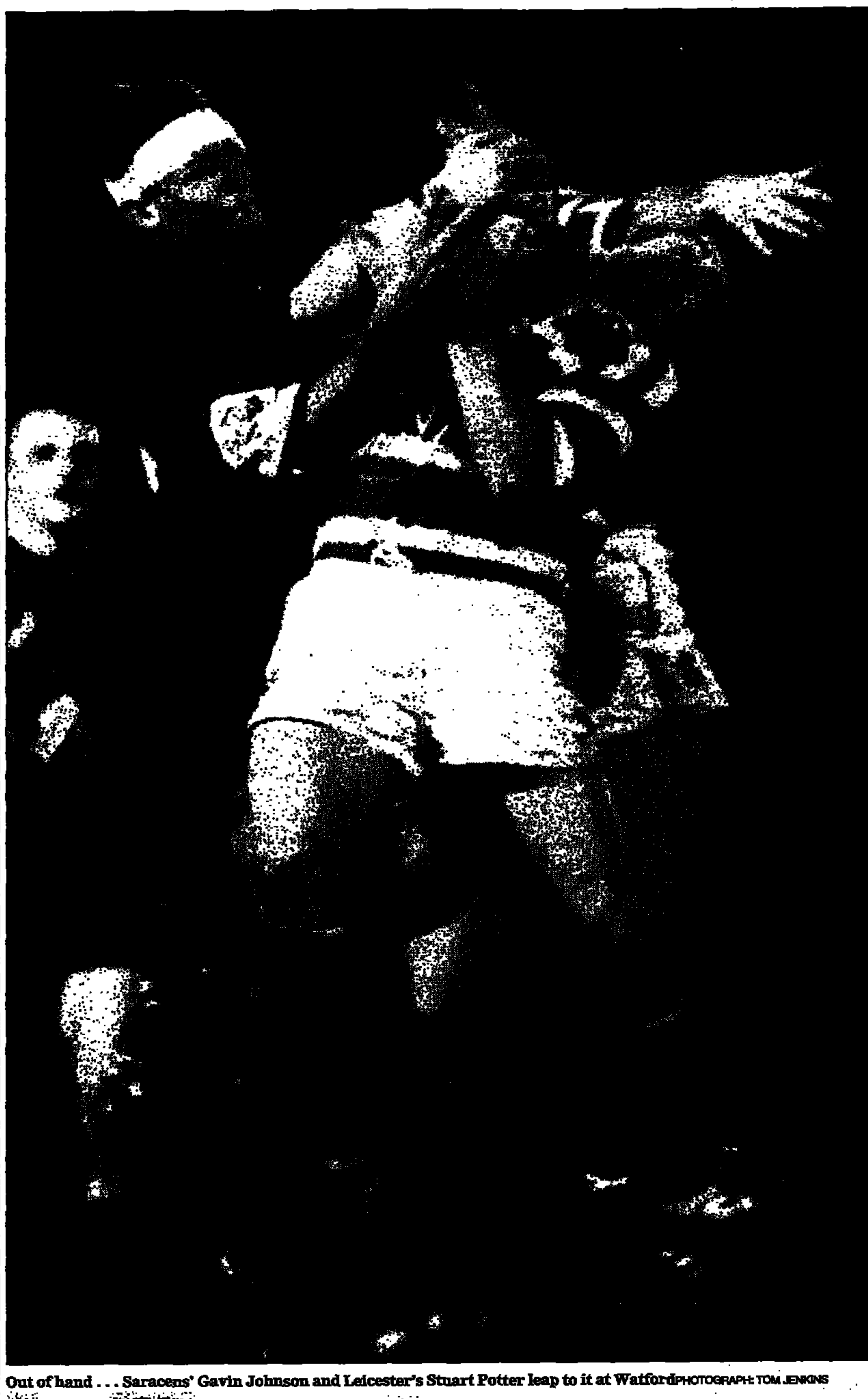
Predictably it was Stransky emerged as the matchwinner, kicking a short penalty for a ruck offence before finally pole-axing the leaders with a killer drop goal from 30 metres.

SCORERS: Saracens: Tries: Constable, Wallace. **Conversions:** Lynagh. **Penalties:** Lynagh 2. **Drop goals** Lynagh. **Leicester: Try:** Van Heerden. **Conversions:** Stransky. **Penalties:** Stransky 4. **Drop goals** Stransky.

Saracens: Johnson; Daniel, Constable, Ravenscroft, R Wallace; Lynagh, Bracken; Grau, Chuter, P Wallace, Johns, Grewcock, *Pienaar (capt)*, Bennett, Diprose.

Leicester: Leeds: Healey, Overend, Potter, Lloyd; Stransky, Serevi; Rowntree, Cockerill, Garforth, Johnson (capt), Van Heerden, Corry, Back, Miller.

Referee: E Morrison (Bristol).



Out of hand . . . Saracens' Gavin Johnson and Leicester's Stuart Potter leap to it at Watford PHOTOGRAPH: TOM JENKINS

Cricket

First Test

Australia v South Africa

Waugh pulls Australians out of danger

AUSTRALIA, looking a ninth successive victory in a series, were rescued from a parlous position by Steve Waugh on the first day of the first Test against South Africa in Melbourne. The Australians, teetering on 77 for four, finished on a respectable 206 without further loss.

Waugh, unbeaten on 87, and Ricky Ponting, with 56 not out, wrested the initiative from Hansie Cronje's side after two sessions of grindingly slow scoring.

In eight Tests against South Africa, Waugh has now amassed 760 at an average of 84.44. He is within sight of his third century against them, having scored 164 in Adelaide four years ago and 160 in Johannesburg last February.

Waugh and Ponting's 129-run partnership took only 150 minutes, a transformation after only 92 runs in the four hours up to the tea interval.

With the bowlers straying off line late in the day and the slow pitch playing a little easier, runs flowed in the last session, much to the relief of the 73,812 crowd at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, the biggest Test crowd at the venue in 22 years.

Earlier, Australia lost their opener Matthew Elliott who went for his favourite hook shot only to top-edge Lance Klusener high to the wicket-keeper Dave Richardson. He had scored six.

Mark Taylor then gave his wicket away after 98 minutes of toil when he slashed at a wide delivery from Brian McMillan and was brilliantly caught at square-leg by Gary Kirsten for 20. Mark Waugh threw away his wicket with two balls left before lunch when Richardson caught him off Allan Donald for a duck.

Greg Blewett's stumping, when he tried to hoist the spinner Pat Symcox over the bowler's head, was only Richardson's second in 40 Tests. But Richardson passed John Waite's South African wicket-keeping record with his 144th Test dismissal.

● The International Cricket Council is expected to take action after the Christmas Day one-day match between India and Sri Lanka in Calcutta, the second in a three-match series, was abandoned after only three overs because the pitch was unfit for play.

AUSTRALIA
First Innings

M Elliott c Richardson b Klusener	6
M Taylor c Kirsten b McMillan	20
G Blewett st Richardson b Symcox	26
M Waugh c Richardson b Donald	0
S Waugh not out	87
R Ponting not out	56
Extras (nb6, lb5, b1)	11
Total (for 4, 90 overs)	206

Fall of wickets: 18, 42, 44, 77.
To bat: I Healy, P Reiffel, S Warne, M Kasprowicz, G McGrath.
Bowling: Donald 17–5–35–1; Pollock 21–5–58–0; Klusener 15–3–28–1; McMillan 10–3–19–1; Kallis 4–2–6–0; Symcox 19–3–48–1; Cronje 4–2–11–0.
SOUTH AFRICA: G Kirsten, A Bacher, J Kallis, D Cullinan, *H Cronje, B McMillan, S Pollock, L Klusener, D Richardson, P Symcox, A Donald.

Women's World Cup semi-final

England v New Zealand

Over-rate dogs angry England

Cath Harris in Madras

ENGLAND's reign as the champions of women's cricket is over. They were beaten by 20 runs by New Zealand in the World Cup semi-final in a match that illustrated their improvement but also showed up their limitations.

For New Zealand, the result helped erase the memory of defeat at Lord's in the 1993 final. But for England, it had a bitter aftertaste.

England were docked one over for a slow bowling rate as New Zealand totalled 175 for six in their 50 overs. But the umpires Perumal Venkatusan and Nataragan Murlidhram had included the two five-minute drinks breaks in their calculations, which managers and coaches had agreed before the tournament would not be counted.

The innings was also halted several times for drinks in 90-degree heat. There were also stoppages when dogs roamed on to the pitch.

"I talked to the umpires after the innings and they agreed to reinstate the 50 overs and we shook hands on it," England's coach Megan Lear said.

"Then with 12 overs left I was told we only had 49. Their decision was wrong. Of course it affected the players, who need to go on to the field knowing how many overs they have left."

But for a 25-run barrage in three overs at the end of the New Zealand innings, England could have won this match. They limited Debbie Hockley, the world's highest run scorer, to 43 off 104 balls after the captain Karen Smithies claimed the wicket of Emily Drumm, the other key scalp, in the fourth over.

It was the batting which failed England, as it had against Australia. England matched New Zealand's scoring rate for most of the game but once Barbara Daniels had gone, leg before for 30 in the 29th over, England had no big hitters left.

New Zealand play Australia in the final on Monday in Calcutta.

NEW ZEALAND

D Hockley c Leng b Edwards	43
E Drumm lbw b Smithies	4
S Fruin run out	29
K Withers b Smithies	35
M Lewis b Reynard	13
K Ramel st Cassar b Smithies	19
C Nicholson not out	3
S McLauchlan not out	1
Extras (b2, lb8, w18)	28
Total (for 6, 50 overs)	175

Fall of wickets: 8, 92, 101, 128, 168, 172.
Did not bat: R Rolls, K Brown, C Campbell.
Bowling: Taylor 10–1–29–0; Smithies 10–2–40–3; Leng 10–0–26–0; Reynard 10–1–38–1; Connor 5–0–14–0; Edwards 5–1–18–1.

ENGLAND

H Plimmer lbw b Withers	1
C Edwards b Campbell	25
B Daniels lbw b McLauchlan	30
S Metcalfe run out	9
J Cassar run out	6
K Smithies c Lewis b Hockley	0
J Brittin st Rolls b Nicholson	32
M Reynard run out	12
K Leng c & b Nicholson	12
C Connor run out	3
C Taylor not out	3
Extras (lb5, w14, nb3)	22
Total (47.5 overs)	155

Fall: 3, 48, 78, 100, 116, 117, 124, 147, 147.
Bowling: Withers 7.5–2–22–1; Nicholson 10–3–29–2; Brown 6–0–21–0; Campbell 10–1–45–1; McLauchlan 9–2–16–1; Ramel 2–0–6–0; Hockley 3–0–11–1.
Umpires: P Venkatusan and N Murlidhram.
New Zealand won by 20 runs

Rugby League

Challenge match: Wigan 46, St Helens 2

Full monties against boys

Andy Wilson

THIS fixture was promoted as The Full Monty, complete with a poster of two players in a suitable state of undress. Yet anyone expecting a one-off challenge match to rival the blood-and-thunder derbies of the days of winter rugby league was more likely to feel Brassed Off.

A crowd of more than 15,000 proved that there is still a healthy appetite for the traditional Christmas fixture, and the gate money will certainly help to pay winter wage-bills, but the result was entirely predictable from the moment that St Helens announced a team that had eight members of their under-19 Academy squad and did not have 13 senior players after the late withdrawal of Bobbie Goulding with 'flu.

Its only significance was to enhance the mood of optimism which has been seeping back to Central Park since a boardroom takeover in October. Losing to this Saints side would have been some embarrassment and no way for John Monie to begin his second stint in charge of the team.

Wigan unveiled two of their four new Australian signings and both were an instant hit. Tony Mestrov is no stranger to the British game after two outstanding seasons with the London Broncos and the prop's running was as strong and direct as usual.

In contrast Mark Bell's only previous knowledge of an English winter came from his Coventry-born wife, but after handling efficiently in the move which brought Jon Clarke the game's opening try in the 12th minute he brought an admiring gasp from the crowd with a delightful pass to Jason Robinson moments later.

After further tries from Henry Paul and Craig Murdock, Wigan led 12–2 by half-time — or as the alternative comedian operating the electronic scoreboard informed us, "For our Norwegian fans, langossten 12–2".

His colleague on the public address was not as smart, mistaking Andy Farrell for Martin Hall when the stocky, blond hooker took over the goalkicking after the Great Britain captain had missed seven out of nine.

The second half was a procession, and a pretty dull one at that, as Wigan crossed for five tries in the first 15 minutes. The wingers Robinson and Danny Ellison each scored twice, the others coming from Gary Connolly, Kris Radlinski and the young substitute Lee Gilmour.

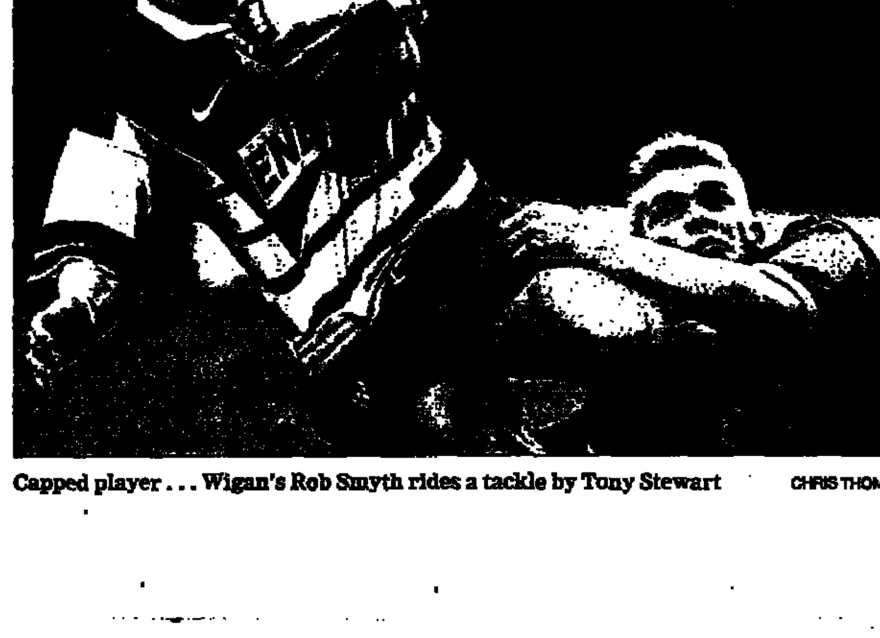
St Helens' only points came from a penalty from Goulding's teenaged replacement Paul Wellens. The pack they fielded should really have done better but Apollo Perelini, Julian O'Neill and Andy Leathem played like men midway through an off-season weight-training programme.

That is the main reason why Monie and his Saints' counterpart Sean McRae would be happy to see this fixture dropped. As rain poured down for much of a dismal second half, few of the spectators would have disagreed.

Wigan: Radlinski; Robinson, Bell, Connolly, Ellison; Paul, Murdock; Cowie, Clarke, Hansen, Haughton, Holgate, Farrell. **Substitutes:** Mestrov, Tallec, Hall, Cardiss, Smyth, Gilmour.

St Helens: Johnson; Stewart, Haigh, Cross, Sullivan; Hammond, Wellens, O'Neill, Anderson, Leathem, Perelini, Pickavance, Barrow. **Substitutes:** Capewell, Hamilton, Arkwright, Price, Newall, Pimblett.

Referee: S Cummings (Widnes).



Capped player . . . Wigan's Rob Smyth rides a tackle by Tony Stewart CHRIS THOMOND

Chess

Adams blitzes into final

Leonard Barden

AN EPIC all-British world championship semi-final eliminator in Groningen ended with Michael Adams beating Nigel Short 4–3 to secure at least £230,000 in prize money. Yesterday the 26-year-old Cornishman began a four-game final against Vishy Anand of India for the right to challenge Anatoly Karpov for the Fide title.

Adams and Short won one game each at classical slow time limits before contesting a series of increasingly fast tie-breaks on Christmas Day. After two draws with 30 minutes then two more with 15 minutes on the clock for all their moves, they played a sudden-death blitz game.

Short, having drawn the white pieces, was given six minutes on the clock to Adams's five, but needed to win whereas Adams had only to draw. In the event Short was soon in trouble. He lost all his pawns on one flank and resigned when Adams's pawns marched down to queen.

The fact that two Englishmen reached the semi-finals after the Americans and Russians were all knocked out is a triumph for the pragmatic and offbeat playing style that has developed in Britain through 30 years of competitive weekend and one-day tournaments where only very high scores are rewarded.

Adams nevertheless has a tough task against Anand, India's world No. 3 and the only player on the world circuit acknowledged as better than Adams at high-speed chess. The winner will challenge Karpov early next month in Lausanne, followed probably by a unifying world-title match with Kasparov, who holds a breakaway version of the world championship.

● *Adams pressed hard* yesterday with white, refusing the offer of a draw after 30 moves of a Sicilian Defence, but after more than four hours' play Anand held out for a draw in 55 moves.

Sailing

Brindabella and Nicorette make the early running

Bob Fisher in Sydney

THE battle at the front of the Sydney-Hobart race, the annual 630-mile classic, is between George Snow's 75ft Brindabella and the 71ft Nicorette of Ludde Ingvall as they head down the New South Wales coast.

It was a typical Boxing Day start in Sydney Harbour with the entire fleet of 114 boats ranged along the starting line, lengthened this year, from Steele Point to Taylor's Bay.

Inevitably Brindabella and the Swedish boat Nicorette, winner of the Fastnet Race in 1995, freed themselves from the unwelcome attention of the smaller boats which had restricted their early passage and began to stride away.

Behind them was Warwick Miller's 66ft Exile, one of the three boats in the China team which is leading in the Southern Cross Cup series.

Brindabella led by 37 seconds at each of the first two turning marks, one inside the Heads and the other just outside, where the yachts were able to bear away and set spinnakers for the long run south. Brindabella's was up and drawing in a twinkling and so too was Nicorette's, but it had failed to reach the masthead and there was some 10 feet of halyard still to go.

There was a problem and Jonas Wackenhuth was hoisted for some acrobatic halyard changes while the sail still pulled.

Almost 100 feet above the deck, he had to re-clip his climbing harness on to the halyard attached to the spinnaker, then attach the halyard he had used to get there to the sail, free off the initial shackle and be lowered to the deck as the crew hoisted the sail home. It was no everyday task even for a talented bowman like Wackenhuth.

Nicorette was soon in the lead and as darkness fell she still had a mile in hand over Brindabella with Exile two miles further astern.

Handicap calculation made Chris Packer the leader with Starlight Express. Well placed were Karl Kwock's Beau Geste, a Bruce Farr 49-footer and another of the China team, and Syd Fischer's 50ft Raggamuffin, steered by Britain's Andy Beadsworth. Quest, skippered by Mike Broughton and the only British boat here, was also well up with the leaders.

Sport in brief

Snooker

An injunction preventing the board of the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association holding meetings or making co-options to it has been granted in the High Court pending a full hearing, *writes Clive Everton*. The action arose from last Friday's acrimonious agm at which Mark Wildman and Jim Chambers, two critics of the WPBSA chairman Rex Williams, failed to achieve re-election to the board.

Lawyers representing Stephen Hendry and other players managed by Ian Doyle, also a critic of Williams's recent handling of affairs, argued that Williams had acted beyond his powers and contrary to custom and practice in disqualifying two votes from the 50-man electorate.

Motor Racing

Ferrari have named Luca Badoer, a 26-year-old Italian with 29 grands prix behind him, as their test driver for the 1998 season.

Hockey

Louise Carroll, the 15-year-old who plays for Bonagrass Grove in Dundee, has been named in Great Britain's Olympic development squad and will attend a squad training camp in Spain next month.

Results

Rugby Union

ALLIED DUNBAR: Premiership One Saracens 21, Leicester 22.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Saracens	8	7	0	1	216	125	14
Newcastle	6	6	0	0	180	109	12
Leicester	7	5	0	2	191	134	10
Richmond	8	4	0	4	187	159	8
Harlequins	7	4	0	3	187	188	8
Sale	7	3	0	4	232	201	6
Northampton	7	3	0	4	163	141	6
Bath	6	3	0	3	176	169	6
Gloucester	6	2	0	4	147	149	4
Wasps	5	1	0	4	109	153	2
Ldn Irish	6	1	0	5	90	190	2
Bristol	7	1	0	6	92	252	2

WELSH NATIONAL LEAGUE: First Division: Blackwood 10, Caerphilly 62.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Caerphilly	17	15	0	2	625	272	56
Aberavon	16	12	2	2	451	282	46
Treorchy	16	11	0	5	429	280	41
S Wales Police	16	8	0	8	420	322	32
Merthyr	16	8	3	5	305	286	30
Llandovery	16	8	0	8	324	283	28
Dunvant	16	7	1	8	336	336	25
Bonymaen	16	7	0	9	280	261	24
Cross Keys	16	7	1	8	302	322	24
Abertillery	16	7	1	8	274	321	24
Newbridge	16	7	0	9	270	327	24
Blackwood	17	7	0	10	299	438	23
UWIC	16	4	0	12	359	469	21
Rumney	15	6	1	8	303	405	20
Maesteg	15	5	0	10	271	392	18
Pontypool	16	4	1	11	283	505	14

CLUB MATCH: W Hartlepool 13, Hartlepool Rvrs 7.

Rugby League

FRIENDLY MATCHES: Featherstone 18, Wakefield 12; Leeds 32, Halifax 14; Wigan 46, St Helens 2.

Basketball

BUDWEISER LEAGUE: Leicester 109, London Leopards 122.

NBA: Utah 107, Houston 103; Chicago 90, Miami; Cleveland 98, Dallas 85; Boston 102, Charlotte 99; Chicago 94, LA Clippers 89; San Antonio 91, Indiana 79; Portland 93, Sacramento 82; Minnesota 112, Seattle 103; Golden State 87, Denver 75.

Chess

FIDE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (Groningen, Neth): **Semi-finals:** M Adams (Eng) bt N Short (Eng) 4–3; V Anand (India) bt B Gelfand (Bela) 1½–½.

Cricket

WOMEN'S WORLD CUP: Semi-finals: *New Delhi:* Australia 123–7 (J Broadbent 33, B Clark 31; Bhatt 3–25). India 104 (C Ahir 46; Fitzpatrick 3–18). Australia won by 19 runs. **Chennai:** New Zealand 175–6. England 155 (Nicholson 2–29). New Zealand won by 20 runs.

TOUR MATCH (Port Elizabeth): England U–19 298 (O Shah 67, G Swann 40; Bodi 3–42). South Africa Schools 221 (M van Wyk 60, J Kent 58; Napier 4–43, Powell 3–46). England U–19 won by 47 runs.

American Football

ALOHA BOWL: Washington 51, Michigan State 23.
BLUE-GRAY CLASSIC: Gray 31, Blue 24.

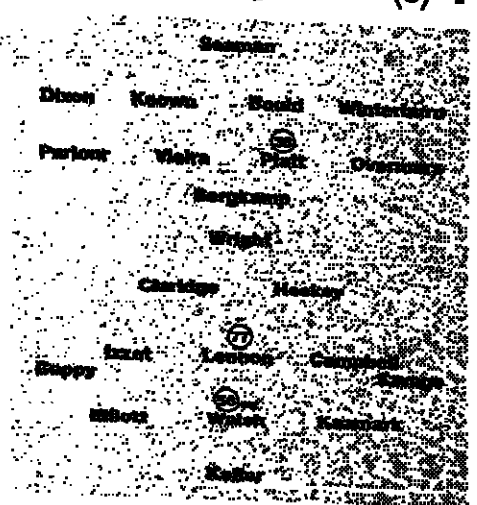
● Bridgend go into today's vital Welsh Premier League fixture against Ebbw Vale without a coach. They have sacked their coaching director John Phillips and have put the club's fortunes temporarily in the hands of the team manager Steve Brown, the backs coach Alun Donovan and coaching adviser JPR Williams. The writing was on the wall for the New Zealand-born Phillips with the SWALEC Cup defeat at Garndiffaith last weekend.

● The wicketkeeper Rashid Latif is to captain Pakistan in next month's Bangladesh silver jubilee tournament. Latif takes over from Wasim Akram, who is in London for treatment to a shoulder problem. The limited-overs competition in Bangladesh also features India and starts on January 10.

● Michael Jordan had 24 points and 11 rebounds and Toni Kukoc scored six of his 19 points in a fourth-quarter run that propelled the Chicago Bulls to a 90-80 win over their NBA rivals Miami Heat.

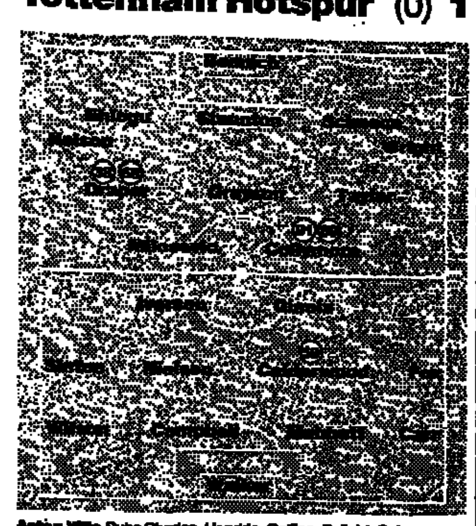
FA Carling Premiership

Arsenal (1) 2 Leicester City (0) 1



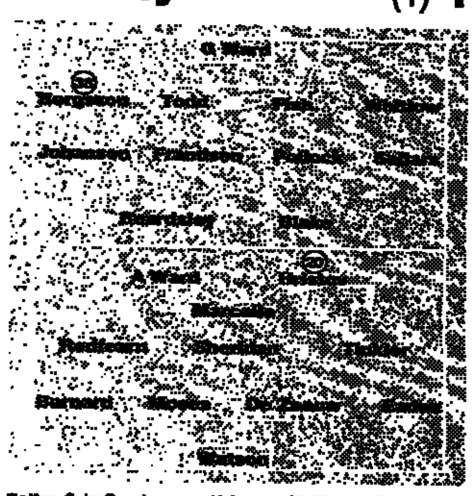
Arsenal *Subs* Anelka (Wright 74), Manninger, Upson, Marshall, Hughes. *Booked* Winterburn.
Leicester *Subs* Parker (Campbell 59), Cottee (Claridge 68), Fenton, Arphexad, Wilson. *Booked* Campbell, Elliott.
Attendance 38,023 **Referee** D R Elleray (Harrow)

Aston Villa (1) 4 Tottenham Hotspur (0) 1



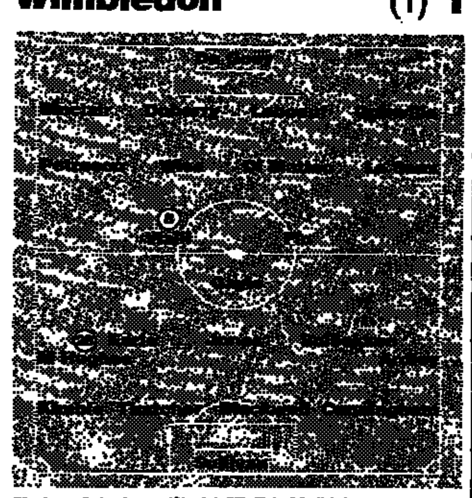
Aston Villa *Subs* Charles, Hendrie, Collins, Byfield, Oakes. *Booked* Ehiogu.
Tottenham *Subs* Clemence (Sinton 26), Anderton (Mabbutt 74), Allen (Wilson 74), Dominguez, Baardsen.
Attendance 38,644 **Referee** A B Wilkie (Chester-le-Street)

Bolton Wanderers (1) 1 Barnsley (1) 1



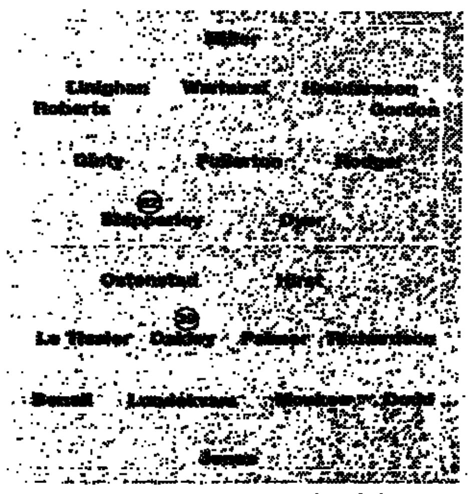
Bolton *Subs* Gunnlaugsson (Johansen 58), Taggart (Fish 62), Cox (Taggart 87), Carr, Jaaskelainen. *Booked* Blake, Bergsson.
Barnsley *Subs* Hendrie (Hristov 67), Liddell (Marcelle 72), Bullock, Appleby, Krizan. *Booked* De Zeeuw.
Attendance 25,000 **Referee** S W Dunn (Bristol)

Chelsea (1) 1 Wimbledon (1) 1



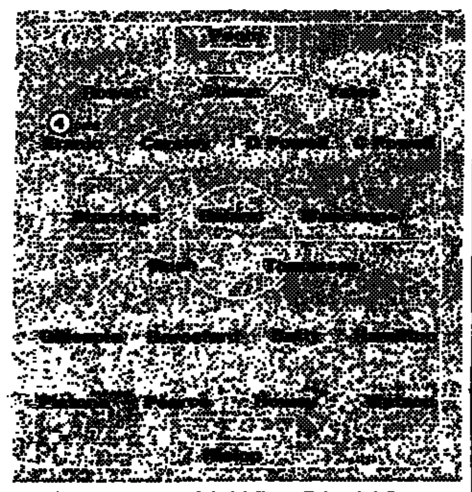
Chelsea *Subs* Clarke (Sinclair 57), Zola (Vialli 61), Lambourde, Hitchcock, Nicholls.
Wimbledon *Subs* Cort (Gayle 67), Heald, Castledine, Jupp, Clarke. *Booked* Thatcher, Hughes, Kimble.
Attendance 34,100 **Referee** G S Willard (Worthing)

Crystal Palace (0) 1 Southampton (1) 1



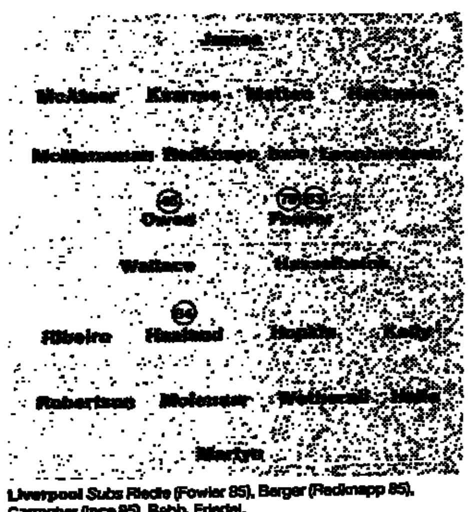
Crystal Palace *Subs* Burton (Fullarton 60), Zohar (Shipperley 71), Quinn, Nash, Emblen. *Booked* Fullarton.
Southampton *Subs* Davies (Ostenstad 65), Williams (Le Tissier 82), Slater (Oakley 85), Moss, Hughes. *Booked* Lundekvam, Hirst, Benali.
Attendance 22,853 **Referee** P E Alcock (Redhill)

Derby County (1) 1 Newcastle United (0) 0



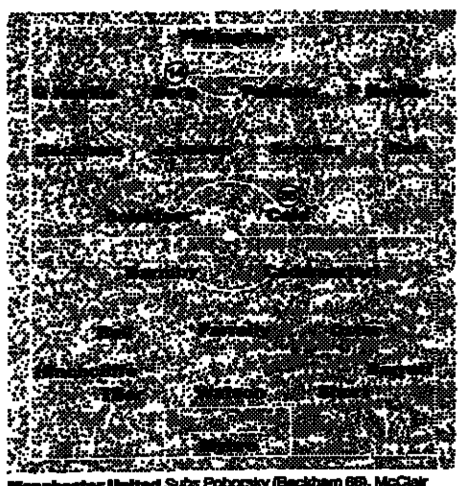
Derby *Subs* Laursen (Eranio h-t), Willems (Baiano 72), Burton (Sturridge 86), Hoult, Kozluk. *Booked* Eranio, D Powell, Rowett.
Newcastle *Subs* Ketsbaia (Tomasson 61), Asprilla (Rush 61), Barnes (Howey 81), Given, Hughes. *Booked* Tomasson, Pearce, Beresford. *Sent off* Batty (64) two bookings.
Attendance 30,232 **Referee** M Reed (Birmingham)

Liverpool (0) 3 Leeds United (0) 1



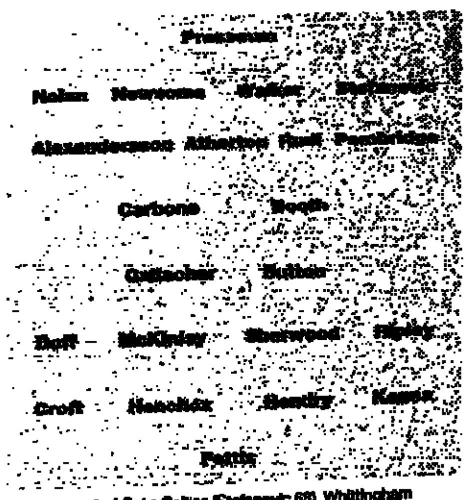
Liverpool *Subs* Riedle (Fowler 85), Berger (Redknapp 85), Carragher (Ince 85), Babb, Friedel.
Leeds *Subs* Bowyer, Beeney, Lilley, Kewell, Maybury. *Booked* Ribeiro.
Attendance 43,854 **Referee** S J Lodge (Barnsley)

Manchester United (2) 2 Everton (0) 0



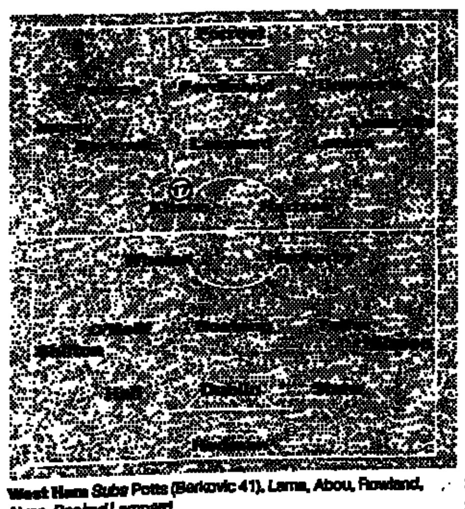
Manchester United *Subs* Poborsky (Beckham 66), McClair (Pallister 74), Curtis (P Neville 83), Sheringham, Giggs. *Booked* G Neville, Cole, Poborsky.
Everton *Subs* Jeffers (Watson h-t), Allen (Barrett 65), Thomsen (Ball 78), Gerrard, Thomas. *Booked* Farrelly, Allen.
Attendance 55,167 **Referee** U D Rennie (Sheffield)

Sheffield Wed (0) 0 Blackburn Rovers (0) 0



Sheffield Wed *Subs* Collins (Stefanovic 68), Whittingham (Carbone 84), Hyde, Clarke, Humphreys. *Booked* Newsome.
Blackburn *Subs* Flitcroft (Ripley 80), Wilcox (Duff 84), Pedersen, Bohinen, Williams.
Attendance 33,502 **Referee** J T Winter (Stockton-on-Tees)

West Ham United (1) 1 Coventry City (0) 0



West Ham *Subs* Potts (Berkovic 41), Lama, Abou, Rowland, Alves. *Booked* Lampard.
Coventry *Subs* Lightbourne (Hall 65), Ogrizovic, Boland, Haworth, Soltvedt. *Booked* Hall, Whelan, Dublin. *Sent off* Boateng (55) two bookings.
Attendance 24,532 **Referee** G Poll (Tring)

Liverpool's wasteful strikers worry Evans

LIVERPOOL may have won yesterday, polishing off Leeds United 3-0 at Anfield in the Premiership, but their manager Roy Evans admitted that his wasteful strikers gave him the jitters.

Robbie Fowler threw away a hatful of chances before scoring twice in four minutes to secure the points, after Michael Owen had scored first.

"The longer it goes on with you level or just one up, you know Leeds can always hit you on the break," Evans said. "We had to be patient, but when you miss as many chances as we did, you are constantly worried about slipping up. It was a worry, even if it did end up a comfortable win."

Roy Hodgson, whose Blackburn side drew 0-0 with Sheffield Wednesday, dismissed the fact that Manchester United, six points clear, appeared to be pulling away.

But Hodgson said: "I am not interested in gaps at this stage of the season. It is not important because there is still a long way to go. But never once this season have I said that this team will beat Manchester United to win the title."

FA Carling Premiership

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Forthcoming fixtures
		Home					Away							
Man Utd	20	9	1	0	30	4	5	3	2	17	9	34	46	28.12 Coventry (a); 10.1 Tottenham (h); 17.1 Southampton (a); 31.1 Leicester (h).
Blackburn	20	7	2	1	23	10	4	5	1	13	9	17	40	28.12 Crystal Palace (h); 11.1 Derby (a); 17.1 Aston Villa (h); 31.1 Liverpool (a).
Chelsea	20	6	2	1	17	7	6	1	4	29	13	26	39	28.12 Southampton (a); 10.1 Coventry (h); 17.1 Everton (a); 31.1 Barnsley (h).
Liverpool	19	7	0	3	23	10	3	4	2	11	8	16	34	28.12 Newcastle (a); 10.1 Wimbledon (h); 17.1 Leicester (a); 31.1 Blackburn (h).
Leeds	20	5	2	3	15	11	5	2	3	14	11	7	34	28.12 Aston Villa (h); 10.1 Arsenal (a); 17.1 Sheff Wed (h); 31.1 Crystal Palace (a).
Arsenal	19	6	2	2	21	8	3	4	2	13	14	12	33	28.12 Tottenham (a); 10.1 Leeds (h); 17.1 Coventry (a); 31.1 Southampton (h).
Derby	20	7	3	0	20	5	2	2	6	14	22	7	32	28.12 Barnsley (a); 11.1 Blackburn (h); 17.1 Wimbledon (a); 31.1 Tottenham (h).
West Ham	20	8	0	1	18	6	1	1	9	8	25	-5	28	28.12 Wimbledon (a); 10.1 Barnsley (h); 17.1 Tottenham (a); 31.1 Everton (h).
Leicester	20	3	5	3	12	10	4	1	4	12	10	4	27	28.12 Sheff Wed (h); 10.1 Aston Villa (a); 17.1 Liverpool (h); 31.1 Man Utd (a).
Newcastle	19	5	3	3	12	11	2	2	4	8	12	-3	26	28.12 Liverpool (h); 10.1 Sheff Wed (a); 17.1 Bolton (h); 31.1 Aston Villa (a).
Aston Villa	20	5	2	3	16	14	2	2	6	8	12	-2	25	28.12 Leeds (a); 10.1 Leicester (h); 17.1 Blackburn (a); 31.1 Newcastle (h).
Wimbledon	19	3	2	5	11	14	3	4	2	9	8	-2	24	28.12 West Ham (h); 10.1 Liverpool (a); 17.1 Derby (h); 31.1 Sheff Wed (a).
Crystal Palace	20	0	4	5	6	15	5	3	3	12	11	-8	22	28.12 Blackburn (a); 10.1 Everton (h); 17.1 Barnsley (a); 31.1 Leeds (h).
Sheff Wed	20	5	2	4	18	17	1	2	6	13	26	-12	22	28.12 Leicester (a); 10.1 Newcastle (h); 17.1 Leeds (a); 31.1 Wimbledon (h).
Southampton	20	5	1	4	17	14	1	2	7	7	16	-6	21	28.12 Chelsea (h); 10.1 Bolton (a); 17.1 Man Utd (h); 31.1 Arsenal (a).
Bolton	20	3	6	1	9	7	1	3	6	8	23	-13	21	28.12 Everton (a); 10.1 Southampton (h); 17.1 Newcastle (a); 31.1 Coventry (h).
Coventry	20	3	6	1	14	10	1	2	7	3	16	-9	20	28.12 Man Utd (h); 10.1 Chelsea (a); 17.1 Arsenal (h); 31.1 Bolton (a).
Tottenham	20	4	2	4	11	14	1	2	7	7	22	-18	19	28.12 Arsenal (h); 10.1 Man Utd (a); 17.1 West Ham (h); 31.1 Derby (a).
Everton	20	3	2	4	11	13	1	3	7	6	16	-12	17	28.12 Bolton (h); 10.1 Crystal Palace (a); 17.1 Chelsea (h); 31.1 West Ham (a).
Barnsley	20	2	2	5	10	20	2	1	8	8	31	-33	15	28.12 Derby (h); 10.1 West Ham (a); 17.1 Crystal Palace (h); 31.1 Chelsea (a).

Nationwide League

FIRST DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Middlesbrough	24	14	6	4	40	19	48
Nottm Forest	24	14	6	4	40	21	48
Charlton	24	13	5	6	45	30	44
Sheff Utd	24	11	10	3	38	24	43
Sunderland	23	12	6	5	37	21	42
West Brom	24	12	4	8	26	23	40
Wolverhampton	24	11	6	7	30	26	39
Stockport	24	11	5	8	42	32	38
Swindon	24	11	5	8	32	34	38
Birmingham	24	9	8	7	25	19	35
Bradford C	24	8	9	7	22	24	33
QPR	24	8	6	10	29	39	30
Norwich	24	8	6	10	24	34	30
Stoke	24	7	7	10	26	32	28
Reading	24	7	7	10	23	36	28
Ipswich	23	6	9	8	27	26	27
Oxford Utd	24	7	5	12	29	34	26
Port Vale	24	7	5	12	26	33	26
Crewe	24	7	3	14	27	38	24
Man City	24	6	6	12	26	28	24
Portsmouth	23	6	5	12	29	37	23
Tranmere	23	6	5	12	28	34	23
Huddersfield	24	6	5	13	24	38	23
Bury	24	4	11	9	22	32	23

Charlton (0)2 Kinsella 59, Robinson 82 **Norwich** (0)1 Bellamy 81 (pen)
Charlton Salmon, Brown, Bowen, Jones, Rufus, Chapple, Newton, Kinsella, Robinson, Mendonca, Leaburn. Subs (not used): Barness, Lisbie, Allen.
Norwich C Marshall, Segura, Mills, Grant, Scott, Jackson, Forbes, Fuglestad, Roberts (O'Neill 55), Bellamy, Milligan, Milligan. Subs (not used): Fleming, Carey.
Att: 14,472. Ref: P S Danson (Leicester).

Crewe (1)1 Holsgrove 19 **Man City** (0)0
Crewe Kearton, Bignot, Smith, Westwood, Unsworth, Charnock, Rivers, Holsgrove, Adebola, Johnson, Little. Subs (not used): Foran, Lunt, Garvey.
Man C Wright, Edghill, Shelia, Brown, Symons, Wiekens, Brannan, Russell, Dickov, Kinkladze, Rosler. Subs (not used): Brightwell, Van Blerk, Whitley.
Att: 5,759. Ref: T Jones (Barrow-in-Furness).

Huddersfld (0)0 **Middlesbro** (0)1 Gray 78 (og)
Huddersfield Harper, Phillips, Edwards, Dyson, Morrison, Gray, Dalton, Horne, Payton, Allison, Johnson. Subs (not used): Makel, Lawson, Burnett.
Middlesbrough Schwarzer, Fleming, Kinder, Festa, Pearson, Mustoe, Hignett, Townsend, Beck, Merson, Stamp. Subs (not used): Vickers, Maddison, Moreno.
Att: 18,820. Ref: B Coddington (Sheffield).

Ipswich (0)0 **Birmingham** (0)1 McCarthy 83
Ipswich Wright, Stockwell, Taricco, Williams, Tanner, Cundy, Milton, Holland, Johnson, Mathie, Petta. Subs (not used): Sonner, Naylor, Mowbray.
Birmingham Bennett, Bass, Charlton, Bruce, Ablett, O'Connor, McCarthy, Robinson, Forster, Hughes, Ndlovu. Subs (not used): Johnson, Grainger, Francis.
Att: 17,459. Ref: R D Furnandiz (Doncaster).

Nottm For (3)3 Campbell 10, 22, Johnson 23 **Swindon** (0)0
Nottm Forest Beasant, Lyttle, Rogers, Cooper, Chettle, Johnson, Stone, Gemmill, Van Hooijdonk, Campbell, Woan. Subs (not used): Bonalair, Armstrong, Moore.
Swindon Digby, Borrows, Robinson, Leitch, Taylor, McDonald, Thompson, Collins, Finney, Ndah, Gooden. Subs (not used): Hay, Drysdale, Walters.
Att: 26,500. Ref: G Laws (Whitley Bay).

Portsmth (1)3 Pethick 35, McLoughlin 53 (pen), Hall 80 **Q.P.R.** (1)1 Sheron 31
Portsmouth Knight, Pethick, Thomson, McLoughlin, Waterman, Awford, Hall, Foster, Aloisi, Svensson, Turner. Subs (not used): Durnin, Igoe, Perrett.
QPR Roberts, Yates, Brazier, Quashie, Ready, Maddix, Spencer, Peacock, Murray, Sheron, Sinclair. Subs (not used): Barker, Perry, Gallen.
Att: 12,314. Ref: M J Brandwood (Lichfield).

Reading (2)2 McDermott 1 (og), Williams 27 **W.B.A.** (0)1 Kilbane 77
Reading Hammond, Booty, Swales, Lambert (Bowen 75), Bernal, Davies, Parkinson, Hodges, Asaba (Lovell 82), Morley, Williams. Sub (not used): Bodin.
WBA Miller, McDermott, Smith, Sneekes, Burgess, Mardon (Dobson 87), Flynn (Hughes 32), Hamilton, Butler (Evans 65), Hunt, Kilbane.
Att: 10,154. Ref: A P D'Urso (Billericay).

Stockport (0)3 Travis 66, 80, Bennett 71 **Port Vale** (0)0
Stockport Co Nixon, Connelly, Searle, Bennett, Flynn, McIntosh, Gannon, Byrne, Angell, Armstrong, Cooper. Subs (not used): Woodthorpe, Dinning, Travis.
Port Vale Musselwhite, Porter, Tankard, Bogie, Hill, Beesley, Ainsworth, Talbot, Foyle, Jansson, Koordes. Subs (not used): Naylor, Mills, Corden.
Att: 10,003. Ref: F G Stretton (Nottingham).

Stoke (0)2 Forsyth 58, Thorne 86 **Sheff Utd** (0)2 Taylor 59, Deane 90
Stoke Muggleton, Pickering, Griffin, Sigurdsson, Tweed, Keen, Forsyth, MacKenzie, Thorne, Stewart, Kavanagh. Subs (not used): Gabbiadini, Tiatto, Whittle.
Sheff Utd Kelly, Borbokis, Woodhouse, Ford, Lee, Nilsen, Saunders, Marker, Taylor, Deane, Stuart. Subs (not used): Fjortoft, Katchouro, Hutchison.
Att: 19,723. Ref: S W Mathieson (Stockport).

Sunderland (1)2 Phillips 11, Johnston 58 **Bradford** (0)0
Sunderland Perez, Holloway, Gray, Clark, Craddock, Williams, Summerbee, Rae, Quinn, Phillips, Johnston. Subs (not used): Smith, Ord, Makin.
Bradford Walsh, Ramage, Small, Murray, Youds, O'Brien, Lawrence, Pepper, Steiner, Edinho, Beagrie. Subs (not used): McGinley, Blake, Wilder.
Att: 40,055. Ref: P Rejer (Tipton).

Tranmere (0)0 **Bury** (0)0
Tranmere Simonsen, Stevens, Thompson, McGreal, Thorn, Irons, Mellon, G. Jones, Kelly, O'Brien, L. Jones. Subs (not used): Morrissey, Parkinson, Challinor.
Bury Kiely, Patterson, Armstrong, Daws, Lucketti, Butler, Swailes, Ellis, Battersby, Johnrose, Gray. Subs (not used): Woodward, Dalglish, Gray Jr.
Att: 9,146. Ref: R Pearson (Peterlee).

Wolves (1)1 Goodman 19 **Oxford** (0)0
Wolves Stowell, Atkins, Froggatt, Robinson, Richards, Curle, Goodman, Simpson, Keane, Freedman, Osborn. Subs (not used): Muscat, Paatelainen, Daley.
Oxford Whitehead, Gray, Ford, Robinson, Purse, Gilchrist, Massey, Smith, Aldridge, Jemson, Beauchamp. Subs (not used): Angel, Remy, Wilsterman.
Att: 26,238. Ref: P R Richards (Preston).

Nationwide League

SECOND DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Watford	24	16	6	2	38	15	54
Bristol City	24	16	4	4	44	19	52
Oldham	24	9	9	6	36	30	36
Northampton	24	9	9	6	27	19	36
York	24	9	8	7	31	28	35
Millwall	23	10	5	8	29	28	35
Grimsby	23	9	8	6	28	18	35
Chesterfield	24	8	11	5	22	18	35
Bristol Rvrs	24	9	7	8	32	35	34
Fulham	24	9	7	8	29	26	34
Blackpool	24	9	6	9	33	37	33
Bournemouth	24	8	9	7	28	24	33
Preston	24	9	5	10	30	24	32
Wrexham	23	7	10	6	29	26	31
Walsall	23	8	6	9	24	26	30
Wigan	23	8	5	10	36	35	29
Gillingham	24	7	7	10	27	36	28
Wycombe	24	6	9	9	30	35	27
Southend	24	7	6	11	28	44	27
Plymouth	24	5	9	10	29	35	24
Luton	23	5	8	10	25	37	23
Brentford	24	5	8	11	25	40	23
Burnley	24	4	9	11	23	34	21
Carlisle	24	5	5	14	27	43	20

Bournemth (1)4 Jones 15, 88, Robinson 53, Young 75 **Gillingham** (0)0
Bournemouth Glass, Young, Vincent, Howe, Cox, Teather (Rawlinson 37), O'Neill, Robinson, Jones, Fletcher (Hayter 86), Warren. Sub (not used): Rolling.
Gillingham Pollitt, Pennock, Masters, Smith, Green (Galloway 85), Butters, Hessenthaler (Butler 86), Southall, Onuora, Akinbiyi, Ratcliffe (Bryant 45).
Att: 5,672. Ref: A Bates (Stoke-on-Trent).

Brentford (1)1 Taylor 42 **Southend** (0)1 Coulbault 80
Brentford Dearden, McPherson (Denys 82), Watson (Barrowcliffe 53), Hutchings, Bates, Oatway, Townley, Gleghorn, Scott (Bent 78), Aspinall, Taylor.
Southend Southall, Hails, Jones, Coulbault, Harris, Dublin, Beard, Gridelet, Boere, N'Diaye, Clarke. Subs (not used): Thomson, Perkins, Stimson.
Att: 5,341. Ref: C J Foy (St Helens).

Bristol City (2)4 Cramb 10, Edwards 17, Tinnion 59, Taylor 66 **Millwall** (0)1 Veart 53
Bristol C Welch, Locke, Bell, Goodridge (Murray 76), Taylor, Carey, Edwards, Doherty, Goater (Torpey 82), Cramb, Tinnion. Sub (not used): Paterson.
Millwall Spink, Brown, Newman, Bowry, Law, Fitzgerald, Savage, Grant, Veart, Shaw, Neill (Sturgess 27). Subs (not used): Allen, Hockton.
Att: 15,128. Ref: R J Harris (Oxford).

Burnley (0)0 **Chesterfld** (0)0
Burnley Beresford, Brass, Vinnicombe, Harrison, Howey, Moore, Williams, Ford, Cooke, Barnes, Matthew. Subs (not used): Smith, Little, Waddle.
Chesterfield Mercer, Hewitt, Perkins, Curtis, Williams, Breckin, Howard, Holland, Reeves, Ebdon, Beaumont. Subs (not used): Wilkinson, Lomas, Willis.
Att: 10,861. Ref: T Heilbron (Newton Aycliffe).

Carlisle (1)1 Stevens 15 **Blackpool** (0)1 Ormerod 53
Carlisle Caig, Hopper, Delap, Barr, Varty, Wallwork, Anthony, Prokas, Stevens, Jansen, Wright. Subs (not used): Pounewatchy, Couzens, Thorpe.
Blackpool Banks, Bryan, Dixon, Butler, Strong, Hughes, Bent, Clarkson, Malkin, Preece, Philpott. Subs (not used): Linighan, Ormerod, Reed.
Att: 5,010. Ref: D Laws (Whitley Bay).

Luton (0)2 Oldfield 57, Thorpe 85 **Northamptn** (2)2 Dozzell 8 (pen), White 13 (og)
Luton Feuer, Patterson, Thomas, Waddock, Davis, White, Allen, McLaren, Oldfield, Thorpe, Alexander. Subs (not used): Davies, Fotiadis, Spring.
Northampton Woodman, Clarkson, Frain, Hill, Gibb, Brightwell, Peer, Heggs, Freestone, Dozzell, Hunt. Subs (not used): Seal, Warner, Tait.
Att: 8,035. Ref: C R Wilkes (Gloucester).

Plymouth (1)1 Barlow 5 **Fulham** (1)4 Moody 18, 80, Hayward 63, Trollope 75
Plymouth Sheffield, Rowbotham, Williams, Hodges, Saunders, Collins, Barlow, Logan, O'Hagan, Corazzin, Billy. Subs (not used): Mauge, Jean, Littlejohn.
Fulham Taylor, Lawrence, Herrera, Trollope, Coleman, Neilson, Smith, Bracewell, Moody, Peschisolido, Hayward. Subs (not used): Carpenter, Cullip, Thomas.
Att: 9,469. Ref: M Fletcher (Warley).

Preston (0)1 Holt 51 **Oldham** (1)1 Hodgson 32
Preston Moilanen, Parkinson, Barrick, Murdock, Moyes, Gregan, Appleton, Cartwright, Holt, Macken, Eyres. Subs (not used): Jackson, Lormor, Darby.
Oldham Kelly, Rickers, Thompson, Graham, Hodgson, Redmond, Hughes, Duxbury, McCarthy, Barlow, Reid. Subs (not used): Allott, Ritchie, McNiven.
Att: 13,441. Ref: K M Lynch (Knaresborough).

Walsall (0)0 **Bristol R** (0)1 Beadle 48
Walsall Walker, Blake, Marsh, Ryder, Mountfield, Peron, Boli, Keister, Keates, Watson, Hodge. Subs (not used): Porter, Roper, Evans.
Bristol Rvrs Collett, Pritchard, Lockwood, Penrice, White, Foster, Holloway, Ramasut, Beadle, Cureton, Hayles. Subs (not used): Alsop, Smith, Hayfield.
Att: 5,634. Ref: D R Crick (Worcester Park).

Wrexham (1)2 Owen 39, Connolly 65 **Wigan** (1)2 Smeets 22, Kilford 71
Wrexham Marriott, McGregor, Hardy, Russell, Humes (Ridler 78), Carey, Chalk (Skinner 56), Owen, Connolly, Spink (Roberts 64), Ward.
Wigan Carroll, Green, Sharp, Greenall, McGibbon, Morgan, Lee, Kilford, Smeets (Warne 64), Rogers, Lowe (Branch 58). Sub (not used): Fitzhenry.
Att: 4,577. Ref: M L Dean (Eastham).

Wycombe (0)0 **Watford** (0)0
Wycombe Taylor, Kerslake, Kavanagh, Ryan, McCarthy, Forsyth, Carroll, Scott, Stallard, McGavin, Brown. Subs (not used): Mohan, Harkin, Simpson.
Watford Chamberlain, Gibbs, Kennedy, Page, Millen, Mooney, Noel-Williams, Hyde, Lee, Johnson, Robinson. Subs (not used): Palmer, Lowndes, Easton.
Att: 8,090. Ref: M E Pierce (Portsmouth).

York (0)0 **Grimsby** (0)0
York Warrington, Murty, Hall, Pouton, Jones, Barras, Himsworth, Tinkler, Cresswell, Rowe, Stephenson. Subs (not used): Jordan, Greening, Bull.
Grimsby Davison, McDermott, Gallimore, Handyside, Rodger, Jobling, Donovan, Widdrington, Livingstone, Black, Groves. Subs (not used): Clare, Lever, Butterfield.
Att: 7,093. Ref: J P Robinson (Hull).

Nationwide League

THIRD DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Notts County	24	13	8	3	38	24	47
Peterborough	24	11	10	3	44	22	43
Lincoln City	24	11	8	5	25	23	41
Exeter	24	10	9	5	35	26	39
Rotherham	24	10	8	6	38	32	38
Barnet	24	11	5	8	38	30	38
Hartlepool	24	8	13	3	38	26	37
Scarborough	24	11	4	9	36	34	37
Chester	24	11	4	9	35	31	37
Torquay	24	10	7	7	34	32	37
Leyton Orient	24	9	7	8	25	22	34
Macclesfield	23	8	9	6	32	27	33
Scunthorpe	23	9	6	8	30	30	33
Colchester	23	8	7	8	35	35	31
Cambridge Utd	24	7	10	7	32	30	31
Rochdale	24	9	2	13	30	30	29
Cardiff	23	5	14	4	21	21	29
Shrewsbury	23	7	6	10	33	35	27
Mansfield	23	6	8	9	28	29	26
Darlington	23	6	8	9	29	34	26
Hull	24	6	4	14	33	44	22
Swansea	24	6	4	14	23	39	22
Brighton	24	3	9	12	20	34	18
Doncaster	23	1	6	16	16	57	9

Barnet (0)2 Simpson 57, Devine 80 **Peterboro** (0)0
Barnet Harrison, Stockley (Wilson 4), Harle, Heald, Howarth, Basham, Searle, Goodhind, Devine, McGleish (Mustafa 88), Simpson, Wilson (Manuel 86).
Peterborough Tyler, Linton (Neal 67), Drury, Castle (Lewis 64), Rennie, Edwards, Houghton, Payne, Carruthers (Rowe 64), Quinn, Farrell.
Att: 3,449. Ref: B Knight (Orpington).

Brighton (0)4 Emblen 47, 62, 86, Minton 68 (pen) **Colchester** (3)4 Rankin 15, 28, Adcock 23, Stamps 73
Brighton Rust, Smith, Tuck (Westcott 45), Minton, Hobson, Johnson, Storer, Mayo, Barker, Emblen, Linger. Subs (not used): Saul, Ansah.
Colchester Emberson, Dunne, Gregory, Skelton (Buckle 45), Greene, Cawley, Wilkins, Rankin, Forbes (Duguid 73), Adcock, Stamps. Sub (not used): Sale.
Att: 2,647. Ref: M R Halsey (Welwyn Gdn C).

Cambridge (0)1 Wanless 47 **Leyton O** (0)0
Cambridge Barrett, Chenery, Wilson, Ashbee, Foster, Campbell, Wanless, Kyd, Taylor, Butler, Beall. Subs (not used): Benjamin, Joseph, Rees.
L Orient Hyde, Channing, Naylor, Smith, Hicks (Griffiths 60), Joseph, Ling, Warren, Simpson (Richards 73), Harris, Inglethorpe (Hanson 83).
Att: 4,808. Ref: K A Leach (Wolverhampton).

Cardiff (1)1 Dale 10 **Exeter** (0)1 Illman 82
Cardiff Hallworth, Middleton, Beech, Young, Harris, Fowler, O'Sullivan, Penney, Saville, Dale, Carss. Subs (not used): Jarman, Stoker, White.
Exeter Bayes, Gale, Cyrus (Illman 55), Blake, Clark, Richardson, Rowbotham, Devlin, Tisdale, Medlin (Fry 73), Flack. Subs (not used). Gardner.
Att: 6,523. Ref: S G Bennett (Redhill).

Darlington (1)4 Naylor 45, Oliver 55, Dorner 65, 73 **Macclesfld** (0)2 De Vos 48 (og), Askey 90
Darlington Preece, Shaw, Barnard, De Vos, Brumwell, Atkinson, Oliver, Gaughan, Roberts, Dorner, Naylor. Subs (not used): Hope, Robinson, Di Iella.
Macclesfield Price, Tinson (Rose 46), Edey, Payne, Howarth, McDonald, Askey, Wood, Irving (Peel 71), Power, Sorvel. Subs (not used): Landon.
Att: 3,042. Ref: S J Baines (Chesterfield).

Doncaster P **Mansfield** P

Hartlepool (1)3 Halliday 4, 65, Clark 87 **Scarboro** (0)0
Hartlepool Hollund, Knowles, Lucas, Barron, McDonald, Ingram, Beech, Cullen, Pedersen, Halliday, Howard. Subs (not used): Clark, Hutt, Miller.
Scarborough Rhodes, Kaye, Heckingbottom, Conway, Atkin, Rockett, Williams, McElhatton (Campbell 60), Robinson (G. Bennett 71), Brodie, Snodin (T. Bennett 78).
Att: 3,905. Ref: A R Leake (Darwen).

Hull (0)1 Dewhurst 68 **Chester** (0)2 Whelan 62, Thomas 87
Hull City Wilson, Lowthorpe, Rioch, Dewhurst, Hocking, Joyce, Boltney, Rocastle, Darby, Mann, Maxfield. Subs (not used): Wright, Ellington, Quigley.
Chester Sinclair, Davidson, Jenkins, Richardson, Whelan, Alsford, Bennett, Woods (Jones 71), Rimmer, Flitcroft, McDonald (Thomas 54). Subs (not used): Giles.
Att: 5,807. Ref: M D Messias (York).

Lincoln (0)0 **Rotherham** (0)1 White 82
Lincoln City Vaughan, Smith, Whitney, Fleming, Holmes, Austin, Walling, Hone, Gordon, Brown, Stones. Subs (not used): Robertson, Alcide, Stant.
Rotherham Mimms, Richardson, Roscoe, Garner, Knill, Warner, Berry, Thompson (Goodwin 46), White, Glover, Taylor. Subs (not used): Hurst, Bos.
Att: 6,260. Ref: M S Pike (Barrow-in-Furness).

Rochdale (1)3 Lancashire 40, Painter 71, Bryson 90 **Shrewsbry** (1)1 Wilding 45
Rochdale Edwards, Fensome, Barlow, Reed, Pender, Gouck, Bailey, Painter, Leonard, Farrell, Atkinson. Subs (not used): Bryson, Stuart, Lancashire.
Shrewsbury Edwards, Taylor (Currie 72), Hanmer, Preece, Gayle, Wilding (Herbert 45), Tretton, White, Steele, Seabury, Scott (Jagielka 82).
Att: 2,247. Ref: A G Wiley (Burntwood).

Sc'thorpe (1)1 Hendon 3 (og) **Notts Co** (1)2 Jones 48, 8
Scunthorpe United Clarke, Walsh, McAuley, Sertori, Neil, Hope, Walker, D'Auria, Eyre, Forrester, Housham. Subs (not used): Wilcox, Calvo-Garcia, Ormondroyd.
Notts Co Ward, Hendon, Pearce, Redmile, Strodder, Baraclough (Robinson 55), Finnan, Derry, Farrell, Jones, Robson (Martindale 86). Subs (not used): Kiwomya.
Att: 4,781. Ref: D Pugh (Wirral).

Torquay (0)2 Hill 52, Roberts 80 **Swansea** (0)0
Torquay United Veysey, Gurney, Mitchell, Robinson, Gittens, Watson, Leadbitter, Hill, Jack, Roberts, Tully. Subs (not used): Thomas, Badesu, Hapgood.
Swansea City Freestone, Price, Hartfield (Bird 58), Walker, Edwards, Bound, Cusack, Watkin (O'Gorman 69), Appleby (Jenkins 24), Ampadu, Coates.
Att: 2,986. Ref: M C Bailey (Impington).

Non-League

CONFERENCE

Cheltenham	2	Yeovil	0
Dover	2	Welling	1
Gateshead	2	Halifax	2
Hednesford	1	Kettering	1
Hereford	1	Kidderminster	0
Leek Tn	3	Telford	1
Morecambe	2	Southport	0
Northwich	1	Stalybridge	0
R & D'monds	2	Stevenage	0
Slough	0	Hayes	0
Woking	3	Farnborough	0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Halifax	22	14	6	2	46	22	48
Cheltenham	20	13	5	2	36	19	44
Morecambe	21	12	5	4	45	28	41
Hednesford	22	11	8	3	35	26	41
Rushden & D	23	13	2	8	40	34	41
Woking	22	11	7	4	38	21	40
Southport	21	9	6	6	36	27	33
Hayes	22	9	5	8	32	25	32
Yeovil	19	9	3	7	32	25	30
Hereford	21	8	6	7	28	27	30
Dover	21	9	3	9	32	38	30
Slough	20	7	6	7	29	26	27
Leek Town	22	6	8	8	31	34	26
Welling	20	7	4	9	29	34	25
Northwich	22	4	12	6	31	37	24
Farnborough	21	6	5	10	30	41	23
Stevenage	22	5	7	10	27	32	22
Kidderminster	23	5	7	11	30	37	22
Telford	22	4	6	12	28	45	18
Kettering	21	3	7	11	21	33	16
Stalybridge	21	4	3	14	23	42	15
Gateshead	22	2	7	13	25	60	13

UNIBOND LEAGUE

Premier Division

Gainsborough	0	Boston Utd	1
Marine	0	Winsford Utd	0
Radcliffe Bor	0	Hyde Utd	0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barrow	24	15	4	5	37	15	49
B Auckland	24	12	7	5	48	33	43
Boston Utd	23	10	10	3	28	18	40
Altrincham	24	11	4	9	42	28	37
Runcorn	23	11	4	8	43	31	37
Guiseley	22	9	9	4	35	26	36
Hyde Utd	24	8	10	6	40	31	34
Winsford Utd	19	9	5	5	21	15	32
Colwyn Bay	21	9	5	7	30	31	32
Emley	20	9	4	7	34	26	31
Chorley	24	9	3	12	34	47	30
Leigh RMI	16	8	5	3	23	13	29
Gainsborough	20	8	4	8	23	21	28
A Stanley	26	6	10	10	31	35	28
Marine	20	7	6	7	26	26	27
Spennymoor	21	7	6	8	27	34	27
Frickley	22	7	5	10	24	33	26
Lancaster	25	7	5	13	34	47	26
Blyth Spartans	21	5	7	9	24	29	22
Bamber Bridge	21	5	5	11	26	41	20
Radcliffe Bor	23	4	6	13	24	43	18
Alfreton Town	21	2	4	15	14	43	10

First Division: Congleton Tn 3, Witton Alb 3; Matlock Tn 3, Buxton 0.

DR MARTENS LEAGUE

Premier Division

Atherstone	2	Nuneaton	2
Bath	3	Merthyr	0
Bromsgrove	2	Halesowen	2
Crawley Tn	0	Hastings	0
Dorchester	1	Salisbury	0
Forest Green	1	Gloucester C	1
Gresley Rvrs	2	Burton Alb	0
Rothwell Tn	1	Kings Lynn	2
Sittingbourne	3	Cambridge C	1
St Leonards	4	Ashford Tn	1
Worcester C	3	Tamworth	1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Merthyr	21	14	4	3	37	15	46
Worcester City	22	13	3	6	34	22	42
Dorchester	23	11	7	5	36	21	40
Bath	21	11	6	4	41	26	39
Forest Green	22	11	6	5	49	35	39
Halesowen	22	10	8	4	34	16	38
Atherstone	22	10	5	7	31	27	35
Kings Lynn	19	10	5	4	30	27	35
Nuneaton	22	10	4	8	48	34	34
Crawley Town	23	8	8	7	34	32	32
Burton Albion	23	8	7	8	28	25	31
Tamworth	21	8	4	9	39	36	28
Bromsgrove	20	8	3	9	42	35	27
Hastings	22	7	6	9	36	37	27
Gresley Rvrs	23	8	3	12	36	48	27
Gloucester C	22	6	8	8	23	24	26
Salisbury	22	6	6	10	30	38	24
Sittingbourne	22	6	3	13	23	34	21
Rothwell Town	22	4	9	9	29	49	21
Cambridge City	20	5	4	11	24	42	19
Ashford Town	18	3	2	13	12	41	11
St Leonards	22	2	5	15	23	55	11

Midland Division: Bedworth Utd 3 V S Rugby 3; Corby Tn 1 Ilkeston Tn 5; Hinckley Utd 1 Sutton Coldfield Tn 3; Moor Green 2 Redditch Utd 0; Paget Rngrs 0 Solihull Bor 3; RC Warwick 4 Evesham Utd 0; Shepshed Dyn 4 Blakenall 1; Stourbridge 0 Bilston Tn 2; Wisbech Tn 1 Grantham Tn 1. **Postponed:** Brackley Tn v Raunds Tn. **Southern Division:** Baldock Tn 0 Chelmsford C 2; Bashley 4 Weymouth 2; Clevedon Tn 1 Weston-S-Mare 0; Dartford 2 Erith & Belvedere 1; Newport AFC 2 Cinderford Tn 1; Newport I-O-W 2 Fareham Tn 1; Tonbridge Angels 1 Margate 1; Waterlooville 3 Havant Tn 2; Yate Tn 5 Trowbridge Tn 3. **Postponed:** Fisher Ath London v Fleet Tn; Witney Tn v Cirencester Tn.
SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier: Bideford 1, Barnstaple Tn 3.
LEAGUE OF WALES: Aberystwyth 3, Rhayader Tn 2; Caernarfon Tn 2, Porthmadog 2; Caersws 1, Newtown 2; Cemaes Ynys Mon 0, Bangor C 3; Flint Tn 1, Connah's Quay 2; Haverfordwest 1, Ebbw Vale 4; Rhyl 0, Conwy 3. **Postponed:** Welshpool v TNS.
IRISH LEAGUE: Premier Division: Ballymena 2, Coleraine 2; Glentoran 1, Linfield 1; Portadown 2, Glenavon 0. **Postponed:** Cliftonville v Crusaders. **First Division:** Carrick 0, Bangor 2.
FAI NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier Division: Bohemians 1, Derry C 0.

LEADING GOALSCORERS: FA Carling Premiership (total): **17** Cole (Man Utd); Hartson (West Ham). **12** Sutton (Blackburn); Bergkamp (Arsenal); Vialli (Chelsea). **11** Baiano (Derby); Fowler (Liverpool). **10** Wright (Arsenal); Gallacher (Blackburn); Wallace (Leeds); Davies (Southampton); Owen (Liverpool); Wanchope (Derby). **9** Blake (Bolton); Di Canio (Sheff Wed).
Nationwide League: First Division: 18 Van Hooijdonk (Nottm Forest). **15** Angell (Stockport). **14** Hay (Swindon); Mendonca (Charlton); Johnson (Ipswich). **12** Campbell (Nottm Forest); Beck (Middlesbrough); Armstrong (Stockport); Deane (Sheff Utd); Thorne (Stoke). **11** Hunt (West Brom); Beauchamp (Oxford Utd)/ **10** Dalton (Huddersfield); Phillips (Sunderland); Fjortoft (Sheff Utd). **Second Division: 17** Boli (Walsall). **14** Goater (Bristol City); Taylor (Brentford). **13** Stallard (Wycombe); Hayles (Bristol Rovers); Rowe (York). **12** Akinbiyi (Gillingham); Barlow (Oldham); Peschisolido (Fulham); Thorpe (Luton). **10** Lowe (Wigan); Ashcroft (Preston); Kennedy (Watford); Seal (Northampton); Jansen (Carlisle). **Third Division: 19** Quinn (Peterborough). **15** Carruthers (Peterborough). **13** Rowbotham (Exeter). **12** Bennett (Chester); Whitehall (Mansfield); Christie (Mansfield). **11** Cullen (Hartlepool); Williams (Scarborough); Painter (Rochdale); White (Shrewsbury); Roberts (Darlington). **10** Bird (Swansea); Devine (Barnet). **9** Glover (Rotherham); Eyre (Scunthorpe).

POOLS CHECK: Half-time: Score draws (total 9): 2, 3, 15, 29, 31, 42, 43, 47, 48. **No-score draws** (19): 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 17, 18, 20, 25, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 40, 41, 44, 45, 46. **Full-time: Score draws** (12): 2, 3, 4, 18, 23, 26, 27, 28, 31, 36, 47, 48. **No-score draws** (5): 8, 20, 26, 32, 33.

● Ronaldo, Romario and their Brazil team-mates will take a break from year-end holidays to shoot a commercial with the renowned movie director John Woo. The film is for a US sportswear company that sponsors the national soccer team.

The scenes are to be shot in Rio's Galeao-International Airport with the team getting ready to take off for next summer's World Cup in France. When the flight is delayed, Ronaldo and company get off and display their ball-control artistry in the airport. Also taking part in the scenes are Juninho, Denilson, Leonardo and Roberto Carlos, as well as team coach Mario Zagallo.

● The Russian international midfielder Dmitry Alenichev of Spartak Moscow won the annual player-of-the-year award run by the weekly paper Football. The survey was carried out across Russia involving some 200 sports journalists and Alenichev convincingly won the title, scoring 458 points. On Tuesday the 25-year-old midfielder was also named the country's top player by the Russian Football Union at its annual award ceremony.

● Bulgaria's international midfielder Krasimir Balakov was voted his country's footballer of the year. The VfB Stuttgart playmaker is expected to be a key figure in the Bulgarian team at the World Cup finals.

Weekend fixtures

(3.0 unless stated)
(a-t = all-ticket)

Football

Tomorrow

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP
Barnsley v Derby
Blackburn v C Palace
Coventry v Man Utd
Everton v Bolton
Leeds v A Villa
Leicester v Sheff Wed
Newcastle v Liverpool (5.0)
Tottenham v Arsenal
Wimbledon v West Ham

RYMAN LEAGUE: Premier: Chesham v Aylesbury; Dulwich v Kingstonian; Enfield v Boreham Wood; Gravesend & N v Bromley; Hendon v Harrow Bor; Heybridge v B Stortford; Oxford C v Basingstoke; Purfleet v Dag & Red; St Albans v Hitchin; Sutton Utd v Carshalton; Yeading v Walton & Hersham.
UNIBOND LEAGUE: Premier: Alfreton Tn v B Auckland; Altrincham v Leigh RMI; Bamber Br v A Stanley; Frickley v Emley; Guiseley v Blyth; Lancaster v Barrow; Runcorn v Colwyn Bay.
DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Premier Division: Ashford v Rothwell; Cambridge C v Forest Grn; Gloucester C v Gresley; Merthyr v Worcester; Nuneaton v Sittingbourne; Salisbury v St Leonards. **Tomorrow:** Burton v Bromsgrove; Hastings v Bath; Kings Lynn v Atherstone. **Midland:** Bilston v Moor Grn; Redditch v Stourbridge; Solihull v Wisbech; Stafford v Bedworth. **Southern:** Cinderford v Witney; Fareham v Tonbridge; Fleet v Clevedon; Havant v Newport; Margate v Bashley; Weston-S-Mare v Waterlooville; Weymouth v Dartford.
LEAGUE OF WALES: Carmarthen Tn v Cwmbran (2.30); Inter Cable-Tel v Barry Tn (2.30).

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE
First Division
Birmingham v Tranmere
Bradford C v Huddersfield
Bury v Crewe
Man C v Nottm Forest
Middlesbrough v Stockport
Oxford Utd v Sunderland (a-t)
Port Vale v Wolverhampton (1.0)
QPR v Reading
Sheff Utd v Charlton (1.0)
Swindon v Ipswich
West Brom v Stoke

Second Division
Blackpool v Wrexham
Bristol Rvrs v Bournemouth
Chesterfield v York
Fulham v Bristol C (12.0)
Grimsby v Preston (1.0)
Millwall v Luton
Northampton v Walsall (12.0)
Oldham v Burnley (1.0)
Southend v Wycombe (12.0)
Watford v Plymouth
Wigan v Carlisle (12.0; a-t)

Third Division
Chester v Scunthorpe
Exeter v Torquay (11.0)
L Orient v Doncaster
Macclesfield v Rochdale
Mansfield v Lincoln C (12.0)
Notts County v Hartlepool
Peterborough v Brighton
Rotherham v Hull (12.0)
Scarborough v Darlington
Shrewsbury v Cardiff (12.0)
Swansea v Barnet

ARNOTT INSURANCE NORTHERN LEAGUE: First Division: Consett v Easington CW; Durham C v Crook Tn; Murton v Dunston Federation; RTM Newcastle v Penrith; Seaham RS v Stockton; Tow Law Tn v Shildon.

BELL'S SCOTTISH LEAGUE
Premier Division
Aberdeen v Motherwell
Dunfermline v Hearts
Hibernian v Kilmarnock
Rangers v Dundee Utd
St Johnstone v Celtic

SCOTTISH LEAGUE
First Division
Airdrie v St Mirren
Ayr v Gr Morton
Dundee v Falkirk
Hamilton v Partick
Stirling v Raith

Second Division
Clydebank v Clyde
Forfar v Brechin
Inverness CT v East Fife
Stenhousemuir v Livingston
Stranraer v Queen of South

Third Division
Berwick v Dumbarton
Cowdenbeath v Ross Co
East Stirling v Alloa
Montrose v Arbroath
Queen's Pk v Albion

HIGHLAND LEAGUE: Brora Rngrs v Wick Academy; Deveronvale v Buckie Thistle; Fort William v Clachnacuddin; Fraserburgh v Peterhead; Huntly v Cove Rngrs; Lossiemouth v Elgin C; Nairn Co v Forres Mechanics; Rothes v Keith.
FAI NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier Division: Finn Harps v Dundalk (7.30); Sligo Rvrs v Drogheda Utd (7.30). **Tomorrow:** Cork C v Shelbourne (2.0); Shamrock Rvrs v Kilkenny C; UCD v St Patricks Ath (3.15).
IRISH LEAGUE: Premier Division: Ards v Omagh Tn. **First Division:** Ballyclare v Larne; Dungannon Swifts v Limavady Utd; Newry v Distillery.

Rugby Union

ALLIED DUNBAR: Premiership One: Bristol v Newcastle (2.0); Gloucester v Richmond; Harlequins v London Irish; Northampton v Wasps; Sale v Bath. **Premiership Two:** Fylde v Bedford (2.0); Moseley v Rotherham.
JEWSON NATIONAL LEAGUE: One: Harrogate v Wharfedale (2.15); Leeds v Worcester; London Welsh v Rosslyn Pk; Morley v Otley; Nottingham v Newbury; Reading v Lydney (2.15); Rugby v Liverpool St Helens. **Two North:** Hinckley v Sedgley Pk (2.30); Lichfield v Preston Grasshoppers (2.30); Nuneaton v Manchester (2.30); Sandal v Kendal (2.15); Sheffield v Birmingham/Solihull (2.30); Walsall v Aspatria (2.30); Winnington Pk v Stourbridge (2.30). **South:** Cheltenham v North Walsham (2.30); Esher v Bridgwater (2.15); Henley v Clifton (2.0); Met Police v Havant; Plymouth v Camberley (2.30); Tabard v Barking (2.15); Weston-S-Mare v Redruth.
WELSH NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier Division: Bridgend v Ebbw Vale (2.0); Llanelli v Cardiff (2.0); Neath v Newport (2.0); Swansea v Pontypridd (6.0). **First Division:** Aberavon v Treorchy (2.0); Bonymaen v Pontypool (2.0); Cross Keys v Llandovery (2.0); Maesteg v Abertillery (2.0); Merthyr v Newbridge (2.0); South Wales Police v Rumney (2.0); UWIC (Cardiff Inst) v Dunvant (2.0).
TENNENTS PREMIERSHIP: First Division: Edinburgh Acads v Stirling Co (2.0); Jed-Forest v Currie (2.0); Melrose v Hawick (2.0); Watsonians v Boroughmuir (2.0); West of Scotland v Heriots FP (2.0). **Second Division:** Biggar v Gala (2.0); Dundee HSFP v Peebles (2.0); Kelso v Glasgow Hawks (2.0); Kilmarnock v Kirkcaldy (2.0); Preston Lodge v Musselburgh (2.0). **Third Division:** Aberdeen GSFP v Glenrothes (2.0); Glasgow Southern v Ayr (2.0); Gordonians v Selkirk (2.0); Grangemouth v Hillhead/Jordanhill (2.0); Stewarts Mel FP v Stewartry (2.0).

Rugby League

SILK CUT CHALLENGE CUP: Second round: Charleston v Saddleworth (2.0). **Second-round replay:** Leigh Miners v Walney Central (2.0). **Tomorrow: Second round:** Myton Warriors v Norland (11.0).
FRIENDLY MATCHES: Huddersfield v Warrington (2.30). **Tomorrow:** Bramley v Hunslet (12.0).

Tomorrow

LANCASHIRE CUP: Final: Waterhead v Wigan Rose Br (2.0, Saddleworth Rgrs).
CUMBRIA CUP: Final: Broughton RR v Ellenborough (1.0, Derwent Pk, Workington).

Basketball

BUDWEISER LEAGUE: Birmingham v Newcastle (7.30). **Tomorrow:** Chester v London T (5.30); Manchester v Greater London (6.30); Newcastle v Watford (5.30); Sheffield v Crystal Palace (6.0).

Ice Hockey

EXPRESS CUP: Manchester v Bracknell (7.0); Newcastle v Ayr (6.30); Nottingham v Basingstoke (7.0). **Tomorrow:** Ayr v Manchester (6.30); Basingstoke v Newcastle (6.0); Sheffield v Bracknell (6.30).
UPPER DECK CHRISTMAS CUP: Cardiff v Slough (6.30); Fife v Murrayfield (7.0); Kingston v Wightlink (5.30); Lancashire v Peterborough (6.0); Telford v Paisley (7.30). **Tomorrow:** Guildford v Cardiff (6.0); Murrayfield v Fife (6.30); Paisley v Telford (6.30); Peterborough v Lancashire (6.15); Solihull v Kingston (7.0); Wightlink v Slough (6.30).

Stand aside for a stalemate . . . Tore Andre Flo, left, who set up Chelsea's goal, and Wimbledon's Ben Thatcher battle for possession at Stamford Bridge PHOTOGRAPH: PETER JORDAN

Chelsea 1, Wimbledon 1

Low-key Blues lose rhythm

Russell Thomas

THE swagger of the current kings of London was reduced to a heavy-footed trudge yesterday after a Wimbledon side at their uncharitable best and a chill wind blew Chelsea's championship prospects into cool perspective.

Wimbledon, having been gifted an equaliser midway in the first half, merely stuck to their simple, smothering plan and that was enough to keep an out-of-tune Chelsea and a quiet Stamford Bridge subdued. After all the riches said to be beckoning Chelsea, this was plain fare indeed.

After the malevolence of Leeds' visit, this was almost gentlemanly stuff — a mere three bookings, all for Wimbledon — but the combined four points lost at home may do nasty things to Chelsea's title aspirations. On this evidence, such hopes are the stuff of Disney dreams.

There was little imagination, let alone fantasy, from Ruud Gullit's team, even after Gianfranco Zola was brought on just past the hour. The original intention was to keep Zola on the bench, just as Chelsea successfully did in their 2-0 win at Wimbledon in August. Now, even Zola could not find a way past Wimbledon's defence.

Yet the plot had started so promisingly for Chelsea. In the eighth minute Tore Andre Flo cleverly outmanoeuvred Dean Blackwell on the byline and his low cross was jabbed home by Gianluca Vialli. It was the Italian's 12th goal in 15 games and the Bridge settled back in expectation.

Ed De Goey and his defensive colleagues were scarcely troubled until one of them, Frank Sinclair, lost concentration and presented the ball straight to the feet of the diligent Michael Hughes. Sinclair's back-pass was woefully short and the Wimbledon midfielder veered wide of the goalkeeper before planting the ball into the far corner.

Chelsea never recovered from this 27th-minute setback, Sinclair likewise. Early in the second half the full-back was dispossessed by Hughes, this time without issue, but two minutes later Sinclair was replaced by Steve Clarke.

Chelsea, by now, were also in need of creative repairs. Roberto Di Matteo saw a close-range shot parried by Neil Sullivan and Dan Petrescu drove narrowly wide. But the grip of Blackwell and Ben Thatcher was tightening on Vialli and Flo. Zola arrived, at Vialli's expense, and soon delivered a shot luckily deflected by a Wimbledon foot. Yet by this time Wimbledon were rueing their own close things when Hughes was denied by the sprawling De Goey and Marcus Gayle shot just wide.

Stalemate was inevitable though seemingly not for Chelsea's Frank Leboeuf, who greeted the final whistle by hammering the ball into the home dug-out — fortunately vacated — in frustration.

The Wimbledon manager Joe Kinnear could not resist a dig at Chelsea. "They [Chelsea] hit quite a few long balls early on — and in the end they were forced to."

Gullit offered his own acerbic view of the opposition. "It's easier to demolish a car than to put a car together. If we had not given that chance away, they would never have scored."

Confronted with the contrast of Manchester United's recent five-goal demolition of Wimbledon, Gullit responded in typically enigmatic fashion. "Our defence is excellent, the attack is excellent. The big picture is there. But people outside [the club] expect more from us than we are at the moment. We have to take it step by step."

Football

Premiership: Liverpool 3, Leeds United 1

Owen sets up victory hat-trick

Derek Potter

WHEN a rational and independent judge such as Ian St John allows himself a smile and a discreet little jab in the air, there can be no doubting the significance of Liverpool's first hat-trick of wins this season.

The display in the second half was something akin to the days Liverpool won titles and cups for fun, soaking the rest with their backwash.

Even George Graham, whose Leeds United had not lost for seven games and are increasingly hard to beat, had to admit with a tinge of envy: "Liverpool played some good stuff in the second half and got what they deserved. They scored the goal they needed early and took it from there."

Exactly where Liverpool go now will be answered in the New Year. They have promised much at times this season only to deliver little, certainly in the way of the consistency of the Bill Shankly teams St John graced.

The win takes Liverpool into fourth place with a game in hand but still 12 points behind Manchester United, whom they visit on April 11.

At least Liverpool's seventh win at Anfield, where three defeats this season and three last have undermined their chances of seriously challenging United, is a "nudge-nudge" for Alex Ferguson.

Roy Evans, the Liverpool manager, had reason to look anxious when he stalked the touchline despite taking the lead in the 46th minute.

The match-transforming goal rewarded the sharp-shooting and pace of Michael Owen (his third in three games and 10th of the season) and the build-up of Steve Harkness and Bjorn Tore Kvarme as much as the indecision by David Robertson and Robert Molenaar.

Robbie Fowler sharpened his appetite by rolling in the second courtesy of Steve McManaman and tapped in the third seven minutes from the end when Owen scorched past Rod Wallace and Molenaar.

Leeds had been spared the need to scrap their defensive format after only 24 minutes by what must be the miss of the season so far by Jason McAteer. After taking McManaman's return pass in his stride, McAteer sprinted 30 yards, leaving three defenders for dead, but eight yards out he looked up — and promptly shot high.

"The trouble was, he stopped to think," said one supporter, saddened that the chance did not fall to Owen or Fowler. Such master marksmen do not need to look for the target. They know where it is.

David James had one tame header from David Weatherall to save, threw out with penetrating pace to have a hand in the second goal and must now await his fate after the signing of Brad Friedel. Unless the American plays 75 per cent of Liverpool's remaining matches, his future in Britain — and Liverpool's fee of £1 million — will be in the melting pot.

Though the team almost picks itself now, the James-Friedel issue will be a teaser for Evans at Newcastle tomorrow. Presumably he must pick Friedel even at a time when things are going well for James — and Liverpool.

West Ham United 1, Coventry City 0

Killer Kitson

Paul Weaver

LIKE ALL accomplished escapologists Coventry City go through a little pre-miracle routine, in which they show their audience the strength of the chains and handcuffs, the implacability of the straitjacket and the utter hopelessness of their imminent position.

Right now Coventry could not plummet any faster if they drove the team bus off Beachy Head. Perhaps this time they really have gone beyond salvation.

City have lost five of their last six games and their 10 away matches have produced just three goals and one victory, with their last four journeys yielding one goal and no points. And they play Manchester United tomorrow.

In the opening minutes of this match, in which they appeared nervous and off balance, it seemed that West Ham would have little difficulty in improving upon a home record which, with the exception of Manchester United, is superior to anything else in the Premiership.

West Ham had an off-day at Upton Park, however, and Coventry, down to 10 men for the final 35 minutes, might have pinched a point, although it would have been more than they deserved.

The goal that should have opened the floodgates came after 17 minutes. Eyal Berkovic held off two defenders to thread the ball through to Paul Kitson who slipped it under Magnus Hedman.

To be fair to West Ham, Berkovic, so influential in midfield as his old Southampton manager Graeme Sonness looked on from the stands, took a knee injury in the movement and his performance fell away and he was taken off in the 42nd minute. He is unlikely to be fit for tomorrow at Wimbledon.

West Ham, who have now won 11 of their 12 home games in all competitions, did not have too many clear-cut chances after that, but Kitson should have done better in the 74th minute when Frank Lampard's pass sent him clear; the striker lost the ball as he tried to round Hedman, when he might have passed back to the unmarked Lampard. Stan Lazaridis also went close when his attempted cross hit the post.

Coventry were reduced to 10 men when George Boateng, their £250,000 buy from Feyenoord, brought down Lampard to become their fourth player to be sent off this season. It was his second bookable offence and his manager Gordon Strachan was not critical of the referee.

"I was disappointed in the player," said Strachan. "He shouldn't have gone diving in. We did well in stopping Kitson and [John] Hartson today. But quality lets us down. We must try to find some more quality."

There was no lack of ability from Dion Dublin, in the middle of Coventry's defence. This poacher-turned-gamekeeper shut Hartson out of the game. No wonder Crystal Palace have their eye on him.

Crystal Palace 1, Southampton 1

Zohar not so good

Trevor Haylett

FEW Crystal Palace players were willing to take a crucial penalty with 10 minutes remaining at Selhurst Park yesterday. The pressure was considerable, for such things can determine Premiership destiny.

Itzik Zohar, a substitute who had been on the field for eight minutes, is by all accounts a mean striker of the ball but he made a mess of the referee's generosity, allowing Paul Jones to save low to his left and Southampton to survive an open encounter.

Everybody knows the festive season is best spent at home but Palace must have wanted to be anywhere but at their own ground on Boxing Day. On nine occasions now they have failed to claim their first league home win of the season and, thanks to Zohar, that search goes on into 1998.

The Palace manager was asked afterwards how his Israeli midfielder was feeling. "You can imagine that for yourself and he doesn't even get to celebrate Christmas," replied Steve Coppell, who then explained why a player relatively new to the contest was put in that position. "He's confident and I've always been told that if a player feels in the right mood he should be given the chance."

Not long ago Southampton were everybody's poor relation but so wisely has Dave Jones invested that he could afford to rest his inspirational attacker Kevin Davies yesterday in favour of Egil Ostenstad. By comparison, Palace's resources are alarmingly thin.

Bruce Dyer, their usual penalty taker and the player who convinced the referee that Jason Dodd had illegally halted his burst into the area, felt unable to take it because of an ankle injury. And Neil Shipperley, who had minutes earlier scored his sixth goal in eight games to give Palace parity, was forced off with a combination of groin and thigh strains.

Coppell described Southampton's 39th minute opener as a "Le Tissier strike from someone who is not Le Tissier". Dodd scuffed his cross but when it arrived at Matthew Oakley the midfielder unleashed a stunning volley into the net off the underside of the bar.

Though the goal rewarded periods of neat combination play from the visitors it was hard on Palace who had seen Dyer prod an effort against the post in the seventh minute and were further frustrated shortly after when Shipperley was inches away from converting his partner's pass.

Palace's best period built to a crescendo around the hour mark and finally bore fruit on 62 minutes when Dean Gordon met Simon Rodger's corner and Shipperley stabbed the ball home.

Davies promised to swing the game back Southampton's way when he emerged as a second-half substitute but Jones was happy with the point, less so the penalty: "The lad [Dyer] is quick and strong and does not need to add that to his game."

Bolton Wanderers 1, Barnsley 1

Gudni enough

Mark Redding

JUST over 63 years ago Barnsley visited Bolton and were thrashed 8-0 in Wanderers' record league victory.

Ray Westwood scored four in that Second Division showdown during what was to be a momentous season for the tiro forward, who went on to collect 30 goals in 38 league games and earn his first cap for England.

How Bolton could do with another Westwood now. They have scored just 17 in the league this season and could manage no more than one yesterday against the Premiership's poorest defence. Barnsley have now conceded 51 goals, 31 on their travels, but they would have kept a clean sheet in the Reebok had it not been for a freakish piece of brilliance from the Bolton captain Gudni Bergsson seven minutes before half-time.

The home side, who were missing two of their best players in the suspended pair Alan Thompson and Dean Holdsworth, had been strangely hesitant in the last third of the field and David Watson in the Barnsley goal had had nothing to deal with.

Then Bergsson advanced with the ball from his right-back position, moved slightly inside, looked up and, seeing Watson off his line, shot fiercely and precisely from fully 40 yards, over the disbelieving goalkeeper's head and into the net.

"It was a stupendous strike, a wonder goal," said the Barnsley manager Danny Wilson. "It dipped and it bent and went arse over tit before it went in."

It was harsh on Barnsley, who had attacked with an adventure generally thought inappropriate for a basement side, sweeping through the sluggish Bolton midfield like a destructive Christmas whirlwind.

Georgi Hristov had already missed a sitter and fired against the post when he put the visitors ahead in the 20th minute. The goal came when Darren Sheridan drifted right to left across the front of the penalty area before trying his luck with a shot; Gavin Ward chose to punch the ball out but did not connect strongly and Hristov, the £1.5 million buy from Partizan Belgrade, dived forward to head home.

If it had been like watching Brazil in the first half, it was like watching Guatemala in the second as Barnsley concentrated on defence.

Bolton, however, never really looked dangerous, although Per Frandsen was unlucky with a free-kick that came back off the bar. "It would probably have been an injustice had we won," said the Bolton manager Colin Todd.

Bolton now go to Everton tomorrow, with Barnsley at home to Derby County. These two promoted clubs will have a chance to settle their differences again next Saturday in the FA Cup third round at Oakwell but after three draws in their last three games do not bet against a replay.

Scottish preview

Tangerines and bogy men in the champions' stocking

Patrick Glenn

RANGERS must cope with suspensions to key men as well as the ghosts of Christmas past at Ibrox today. No other team has better recent form against the champions than Dundee United.

The team in tangerine beat Rangers last December in one of two league victories against Walter Smith's side during the season, and this time they have two successive wins in recent months.

The Tannadice team's 1-0 victory at Ibrox in September knocked Rangers out of the Coca-Cola Cup and their 2-1 win at home the following month remains the champions' only Premier Division defeat this term.

Paul Gascoigne is serving a five-match ban and Gordon Durie and Rino Gattuso are also suspended. Brian Laudrup, however, has recovered from a back problem and is a certain starter. United have regularly taken Laudrup out of the play with Erik Pedersen's astute marking.

"They set their stall out that way," said Rangers' manager Walter Smith. "They are good at it, too. They have the pace to punish you on the break if you're not careful."

Celtic, just a point behind Rangers in second place, travel to Perth to face St Johnstone without their leading scorer Henrik Larsson, as well as the defenders Marc Rieper and Stephane Mahé.

Coach Wim Jansen is mildly optimistic about having all three back for the Old Firm match at Celtic Park next Friday, but today's game will be awkward enough.

"It's the more important because it comes up first," said Jansen. "Larsson has a little hamstring problem that didn't surface until during the week, but we're hopeful the rest will get him fit again. Rieper and Mahé were both missing last week and we're just making sure they are right before bringing them back."

Larsson's absence seems certain to give Harald Brattbakk, the £2.3 million Norwegian striker from Rosenborg, his first start after two matches as substitute.

Performance of the week: Shaka Hislop (Newcastle United), who gave another excellent goalkeeping performance at Derby yesterday to follow the one against Manchester United on Sunday.

A N Other

THIS hard-working, versatile defender once suffered the indignity of being sent off while representing his country even though he had been guilty of nothing more than receiving a fat lip from an opponent. He was capped 27 times but while he travelled across continents to wear the national colours he never left his county at club level. His first club lay on the road to his second and his third was only next door.

Last week: Liam Brady (Arsenal, Juventus, Sampdoria, Internazionale, Ascoli, West Ham United).

Holsgrove leaves City in a corner

CREWE, one place off the bottom of the First Division before Christmas, put their fellow strugglers Manchester City back in danger with Paul Holsgrove scoring the only goal at Gresty Road.

It was Crewe's third home win of the season and although City forced 16 corners Crewe created the better chances. The biggest disappointment for travelling fans was the poor contribution by Georgi Kinkladze, well shackled by Phil Charnock.

As Crewe began to find early holes in the City defence, the midfielder Holsgrove began to take up a more attacking role. He had two good efforts saved but his persistence paid off in the 19th minute when he swept the ball past Tommy Wright after an effort by Dele Adebola had been charged down.

Crewe might have increased their lead four minutes after the break but the former City season-ticket holder Colin Little shot weakly instead of squaring to the unmarked Adebola.

As Crewe continued to look the more dangerous side, Mark Rivers wasted an excellent chance by blazing over the bar from 12 yards out.

City had the ball in the net in the 72nd minute through the combined efforts of Uwe Rösler and the substitute Jason Van Blerk but the whistle had gone for an infringement.

Rösler, booked earlier for diving, had two late headers on target but Jason Kearton managed to keep them out.

Derby County 1, Newcastle United 0

Dark clouds hovering over toothless Newcastle

Jeremy Alexander

HANGING over Pride Park an hour before kick-off was a woolly cloud in the perfect form of a legless ram. It was a false sign. Derby were anything but hung over, taking only three minutes to break a deadlock that had lasted throughout the clubs' meeting at St James' Park nine days previously.

The Rams raced on to win a fractious match against 10 men as David Batty, already due to start a two-match suspension today, was sent off for a second bookable challenge beyond the hour. He should be nicely rested for the World Cup.

After a bright start, by Derby at least, the match declined from speedy control to carelessness, from frustration to petulance and seven bookings. No sooner have Derby earned a reputation for adventure akin to Keegan's Newcastle than they have lost their luck, or concentration, in front of goal. Jim Smith, their manager, said: "We should have had fours and fives in each of our last three games." They have had two noughts and a penalty.

At least they are making chances. Kenny Dalglish's Newcastle, shorn of adventure and prime strikers, have had five nils in their last six games and picked up two points. Yesterday John Beresford hit the bar with a shot which looped off a defender, but that was all.

And straight after Dalglish put on Faustino Asprilla and Temur Ketsbaia for a possible siege, Batty walked.

After that pre-Christmas draw Dalglish had his Newcastle side back on the pitch for punishment training. Little good it did them, though it did fire them into positive but fruitless action against Manchester United in the interim; here Newcastle were caught as cold as Boxing Day turkey.

Inside 10 seconds Stuart Pearce brought down Dean Sturridge with a tackle which was so late that he must have regretted that plum pudding and yet so early that he escaped a booking, though he got one eventually. His season of goodwill clearly lasted 24 hours.

Sturridge exacted swift revenge. Paulo Wanchope put him through, Des Hamilton challenged, Sturridge went down, Stefanio Eranio converted. Verdicts differed. "A certain penalty," said Smith. "Never touched him," said Dalglish. Managers will be managers.

And Wanchope will be Wanchope. He has so many long limbs that he is a ricochet waiting to happen. Teammates and opponents alike had no idea which way the next would go but the openings kept coming, from his gangly runs, Italian inspiration and Powell power, each in duplicate. Sturridge hit a post but Smith was right: Derby should have made more of their chances, conceived in lightning breaks and lost in over-excitement.

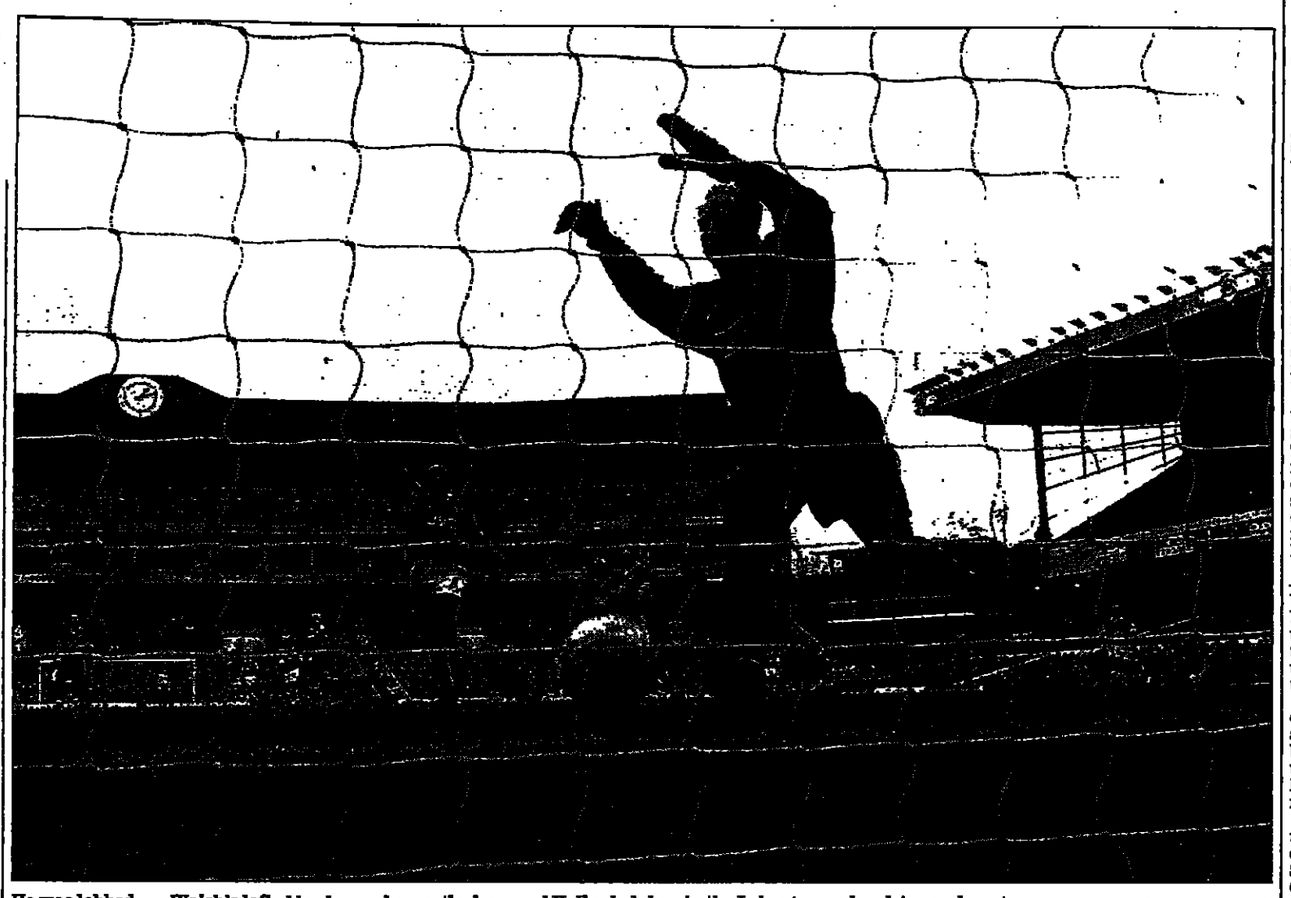
Newcastle created nothing. If their defence was Ramparted, their attack was Ramshackled by the sweeping command of Igor Stimac alongside Dean Yates. Dalglish looks lost for a sign — even in the clouds.

Football

Premiership: Arsenal 2, Leicester City 1

Walsh and Seaman top panto bill

DAVID LACEY



He was lobbed . . . Walsh's lofted back-pass leaves the bemused Keller helpless in the Leicester goal and Arsenal are two up PHOTOGRAPH: TOM JENKINS

ARSENAL are still out of sorts but nobody at Highbury yesterday could have accused them of failing to capture the festive flavour of old films and pantomimes. Before this uninspired win they came close to offering their followers a repeat of one of the season's more memorable horror movies, Nightmare on Filbert Street.

Back in August, when they were playing like early championship contenders, Arsenal had lost a 2-0 advantage at Leicester and recovered to lead 3-2 in stoppage time, only to be held to 3-3 by Steve Walsh's 98th-minute header.

Yesterday a high and hilarious own-goal by Walsh just before the hour saw Arsenal again go two in front, but then David Seaman produced a moment of goalkeeping farce to bring Leicester back into the match and seriously disturb the *sang-froid* of the normally imperturbable Arsène Wenger.

"The last 10 minutes were terrible," admitted Arsenal's French manager. "We did not have the physical or the mental strength to keep calm. We did all the wrong things and lost easy balls. When that happens you get a little nervous."

Fortunately for Arsenal the referee David Elleray saw fit to add only 1min 54sec to normal time. At Filbert Street Graham Barber's long-delayed final whistle had produced angry scenes, with Arsenal protesting, Leicester responding and Ian Wright inevitably at the centre of it all.

Wright, who is about to start a two-match suspension, was again substituted yesterday but this time saw no reason to return to the pitch to make a point. In fact compared to the first match this game was largely devoid of passion — and, for the most part, good football.

Perhaps little more should have been expected from two teams whose season has gone rather flat. Arsenal had lost four of their previous six Premiership fixtures, Leicester had won only two in 10, and the lack of confidence was mutual.

In Arsenal's case the contrast has been all the more stark because of the high standards previously set by Dennis Bergkamp with assistance from Patrick Vieira and the occasional reminder of Wright's goalscoring powers.

Vieira, recently recovered from a hamstring injury, was something like his old self but Bergkamp was still not what he was before the clocks went back and Wright continued to look subdued.

Under Martin O'Neill's management Leicester have always been a hard-working team but at the moment, for the spectator, they are merely hard work. In the eighth minute Emile Heskey, one of England's best young strikers, headed Steve Guppy's corner against the right-hand angle of post and crossbar. After that, though, he received little service until the game was as good as lost.

Only when Leicester were two down did O'Neill bring Garry Parker and, a little later, Tony Cottee off the bench to add a touch of variety to his attack. Perhaps he has become over-reliant on the big final push, with tall defenders like Walsh and Matt Elliott advancing to feed off free-kicks, corners and long throws.

"Grandstand finishes are fantastic and part and parcel of our game," O'Neill maintained. "Today the consolation for us was to hear the home crowd baying for the final whistle." But Arsenal took the points all the same and after lying third in the Premiership at the end of September Leicester have now taken only nine out of a possible 33.

The match always flattered to deceive. Arsenal promised better things when Vieira's tight control enabled him to twist past Stuart Campbell and Neil Lennon in the Leicester penalty area before laying the ball into the path of Marc Overmars, whose shot was not that far wide, but once Pontus Kaamark attached himself to Bergkamp their football became fitful, their passing fragmented.

Heskey's near-miss was followed by some smart saves from Kasey Keller but overall the play stagnated. Then Bergkamp took a free-kick on the left nine minutes before half-time and David Platt reenacted his winning goal against Manchester United seven weeks earlier, timing his leap above taller opponents to nod the ball into the far corner of the net.

Twelve minutes into the second half Steve Bould's punt found Walsh running back towards his own goal with Elliott and Wright not far behind and Keller advancing to meet the danger. Walsh's attempt to lob the ball back to the goalkeeper became a steepling donkey-drop which cleared Keller, plummeted below the bar and bounced into the roof of the net.

O'Neill, a mite charitably, made the gusty wind partly responsible but Seaman had no such excuse in the 77th minute when he received a back-pass from Bould. He managed to evade Heskey's challenge but failed to clear and was stranded by Cottee's interception.

Muzzy Izzet slipped the ball square for Lennon's cool, low shot to defeat Lee Dixon's attempt at a goalline clearance.

Suddenly Leicester were revived but they came no closer to saving the game than the moment in the 82nd minute when Walsh tried to chest in Parker's corner only to see the ball bounce back to Seaman off the far post.

Highbury retired to its cold turkey more relieved than rejoicing, and Platt is now doubtful for tomorrow's north London derby at Tottenham with a groin strain.

Manchester United 2, Everton 0

Cole chips at sad Kendall's fading hopes

Michael Walker

SINGLE mothers, unemployed teenagers, folk on the breadline, the broken-hearted, refugees and the homeless — the Archbishop of Canterbury's Christmas message encompassed almost every sector of the under-privileged in British society. But for some reason he omitted to mention Evertonians.

Against a Manchester United side shorn of Peter Schmeichel (bad back), Teddy Sheringham (demoted) and Ryan Giggs (also demoted) from the starting line-up, the blue diehards of Merseyside might have thought they had a chance.

But after the 15th minute — when Henning Berg put United in front with a header from half an inch — the Everton faithful knew they were watching their team's 11th league defeat of the season.

Had Everton won the other nine games their situation would not be quite as bad but now they are only two points away from Barnsley at the very basement of the Premiership.

More significantly, Everton yesterday lost a point on Bolton, Southampton, Sheffield Wednesday and Crystal Palace, all desperately scrapping above them. Their famous 43-year stay in the top flight is in double jeopardy.

Afterwards Howard Kendall was everything his team had not been — mature and uncompromising. "An embarrassing 90 minutes," was Kendall's opening flourish. "It was men against boys," and "the scoreline flattered us" followed.

United, meanwhile, were happy to keep their momentum and are making progress at a pace that has those around them slipping into the distance. Six points now separate the champions from their nearest challengers, Blackburn.

Ferguson acknowledged the ease of his team's victory, saying: "It was a game of the first half — the second was a non-event. But before the break we were absolutely superb at times and Andy Cole's goal was the highlight."

Indeed it was. Cole collected Nicky Butt's sharp pass 40 yards from goal and took it on a further 15 yards. As Carl Tiler and Craig Short both backed off it seemed at first as if Cole would pass to the overlapping David Beckham but instead — and to the growing amazement of Old Trafford — Cole produced the most delicious of chips that left the otherwise impressive Thomas Myhre motionless.

The ball hit the top corner of the net. As Ferguson said, it was reminiscent of Eric Cantona's effort here against Sunderland last season and with it Cole may finally have stepped out of Cantona's shadow.

This was Cole's 13th goal in the past 11 matches, but he could have improved even on that total during the first half-hour when Everton were carved up.

Particularly exposed were Tiler and his partner on the left side of defence, Andy Hinchcliffe. From the earliest of United probings it was obvious that Beckham and Gary Neville were going to have a fruitful afternoon. Sure enough, United's first attack saw Neville run on to Beckham's perfect pass, only for Cole and Ole Solskjaer to watch the cross fly by.

No matter, from another Beckham centre soon after, this time from the left, Ronny Johnsen rose at the far post to nod the ball back across the Everton six-yard area. There the hapless Earl Barrett propelled the ball goalwards from his shin but Berg pounced on the line to convert and spare Barrett's blushes.

> 'It was men against boys and the scoreline flattered us'
>
> **Howard Kendall**

Myhre then made a superb stop from a volley by Solskjaer, whose first-half performance was enough to justify his inclusion at the expense of Sheringham. Beckham also hit the crossbar and Cole and Solskjaer had further shots blocked.

Cole's goal, 20 minutes after the opener, signalled the end of the affair, though Solskjaer and Beckham both wasted good second-half opportunities.

Everton, meanwhile, created nothing. In mitigation, the spine of Slaven Bilic, Gary Speed and Duncan Ferguson was absent though Kendall said Ferguson is a sure starter tomorrow against Bolton. Dave Watson will not play.

United travel to Coventry, which prompted Alex Ferguson, after admitting "surprise" at the size of his team's lead, to deliver an early New Year resolution: "I hope we come out of the Sunday game with that intact. Then we'll be set up nicely." Indeed they will.

Sheffield Wednesday 0, Blackburn Rovers 0

Miracle spares goalkeepers a terrace taunting

David Hopps

SURELY this did not happen. This could not happen. Just one look in the eyes of both goalkeepers before kick-off would have convinced anybody that most *things were* possible at Hillsborough, but a goalless draw was not one of them.

It was a rousing afternoon when the terrace refrain "dodgy keeper" had promised to become more repetitious than the latest Spice Girls single, and when the nine goals these sides shared in August (well, hardly shared, as Blackburn scored seven) might have been a mere aperitif.

No Premiership match was more laden with goalkeeping nerves. Blackburn's Alan Fettis, on his debut because of injury to Tim Flowers, was apprehensive because he had not been in the side all season; Kevin Pressman, for Wednesday, was paranoid because he had.

By the final whistle, though, Fettis and Pressman could approach New Year with self-respect intact. Fettis, a Northern Ireland international, had done all that could be asked of him; Pressman, too, in a week when he had risked mockery by reflecting that he still had England ambitions, had not been beaten.

Blackburn must have found that galling. In the final minute they twice might have conjured up the goal that would have maintained the pressure on Manchester United. With Jason Wilcox's corners belatedly causing havoc, Chris Sutton crashed a header against the far post for Mark Pembridge to clear. From Wilcox's next corner, Tim Sherwood knocked the ball in with his hand.

Pembridge did produce one spectacular save in one of the season's most unlikely stalemates. Sutton had three chances early in the second half, two of them fleeting affairs from crosses by Stuart Ripley and Damien Duff, the other a wicked 20-yard volley which Pressman sprang to his right to save.

Keeping goal for Wednesday will remain fraught as long as their central defenders miss headers galore. Pressman was all a-jitter from the outset, flapping at Ripley's corner and being grateful for another Pembridge block on the line as Colin Hendry followed up.

Fettis' post was also hit, if not by the ball then certainly by his full-back Gary Croft, as he cleared off the line from Petter Rudi whose looping flick had defeated Sherwood. With Croft still groggy, Sherwood recovered to block the follow-up from Niclas Alexandersson.

Fettis was then harassed by Hendry's back pass, which forced him into an onerous spot of chest control, and a scuttle backwards to intercept Pembridge's volley. A collision with Andy Booth further disorientated him, as did a spectacular overhead from Benito Carbone which faded beyond the far post.

Blackburn's strong second-half display deserved victory, but Wednesday had their moments, notably for Newsome whose stooping header from a yard out sneaked wide.

In the Fantasy Land known as Premiership challengers to Manchester United it is the opinion of Wednesday's manager, Ron Atkinson, that Blackburn will prove more durable than Chelsea, the same Chelsea who had hounded Wednesday for four goals at Hillsborough six days earlier.

After days like this, it all sounds utterly arbitrary.

WOULD YOU KICK A FRIEND WHEN THEY'RE DOWN?

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When your mate's team has taken a drubbing, send him a Virtual Verbal. Rub it in with a singing scoreline, or let him know you really (don't) care with a mock condolence card.

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The Guardian
The Observer

Nationwide League

First Division: Nottingham Forest 3, Swindon Town 0

Campbell's double fires Forest

John Lawson

KEVIN CAMPBELL added two more goals to his season's tally as Nottingham Forest continued to underline their capacity to make an immediate return to the Premiership.

The reborn striker, now with 12 goals to his credit, overshadowed Pierre van Hooijdonk on the day but between them they spearhead a formidable Forest challenge.

Before the match Swindon were rightly regarded as one of the main promotion rivals to Forest and Middlesbrough, who now have a chink of daylight between them and the chasing pack.

But they were systematically destroyed by an irrepressible Forest side in no mood to be on the receiving end of more jeers from the home supporters.

So well did they start that within half an hour Swindon were reduced to damage limitation after conceding three goals that could easily have been more.

Their manager Steve McMahon did not hold back his criticism: "You would never believe that we work on our defensive play every day," he said.

"It was as if we sent lads out on a school park to do a job. Players have got to ask questions of themselves after a performance like that."

In their defence, Campbell turned in such a powerful display in the opening stages that it would have needed players of greater quality than Swindon have to curb the player who is rediscovering his best form by the Trent.

His first decisive strike came in the 10th minute when the educated left foot of Ian Woan sent him clear to finish with aplomb.

Twelve minutes later it was almost a case of *déjà-vu* when this time Scott Gemmill provided the creative work for Campbell to scamper away and finish emphatically.

Van Hooijdonk, as if not to be totally outdone, produced a spectacular header across goal from Alan Rogers's cross in the 29th minute for Andy Johnson to score with a close-range header.

Swindon tried to batten down the hatches after that and with Forest failing to add to their initial spree the visitors succeeded to some degree. But Campbell, on more than one occasion, was desperately close to a hat-trick.

He was inches wide with one effort, saw Mark Robinson clear another off the line and then Fraser Digby denied him midway through the second half with a brave plunge at his feet.

It was not Swindon's day and the closest they came to a goal themselves was in the 13th minute when Ty Gooden sent a searing free-kick just wide of the post.

That early threat soon subsided, however, as Forest turned on the style that looks likely to take them back to the Premiership.

Boro need own-goal to stay aloft

MIDDLESBROUGH stayed atop the First Division after beating Huddersfield at the McAlpine Stadium but now have the free-scoring Nottingham Forest perching with them.

Bryan Robson's side needed a late own-goal by Kevin Gray for victory but Forest, also on 48 points, drew level on goals scored.

Sheffield United left it even later to earn a 2-2 draw at Stoke with Brian Deane's last-gasp goal.

Two goals in three minutes around the hour set up Charlton's 2-1 win over Norwich at The Valley, moving them into third place above Sheffield United. Mark Kinsella and John Robinson put the home side in charge. Norwich's Mike Milligan was sent off in the final minute.

Sunderland, with their fifth successive win, moved above West Bromwich into fifth spot with a 2-0 win over Bradford, while the Baggies gave Denis Smith a bad start as manager by losing 2-1 at Reading. The Royals opened the scoring in the first minute when Albion's Andrew McDermott deflected a Martin Williams cross into his own net and Williams added one himself on 27 minutes.

Portsmouth moved off the bottom with a 3-1 win over QPR leaving Tranmere and Bury, who drew 0-0, in the last two places.

Second Division

MOHAMED Al-Fayed's project to revive Fulham under Kevin Keegan and Ray Wilkins began to bear fruit after a fine 4-1 victory against Plymouth at Home Park.

Goals from Steve Hayward, Paul Trollope and two from Paul Moody helped the London club into 10th place and they are now only two points off the third spot.

The leaders Watford could only manage a goalless draw at Wycombe which allowed Bristol City, 4-1 winners against Millwall, to move to within two points of Graham Taylor's side. The two teams, however, remain comfortably clear of the chasing pack.

At Deepdale, Michael Holt scored a 51st-minute equaliser for Preston after Doug Hodgson had given third-placed Oldham the lead in the 32nd minute.

Luton fought back after going two goals down in the opening 13 minutes through a penalty and an Alan White own goal to salvage a 2-2 draw against Northampton.

Peter Beadle gave Bristol Rovers their fifth away win of the season at Walsall, while sixth-placed York could only manage a goalless draw against Grimsby, in seventh place.

The former West Ham striker Steve Jones scored twice as Bournemouth cruised to a 4-0 victory over Gillingham, who had Adrian Pennock sent off for violent conduct in the 18th minute.

Third Division

NOTTS COUNTY increased their lead at the top of the table to four points with a 2-1 victory against Scunthorpe at Glanford Park yesterday.

Gary Jones scored both County's goals after Ian Hendon had put Scunthorpe ahead with an own goal.

Second-placed Peterborough lost ground when they went down 2-0 at Barnet to goals from Phil Simpson and Sean Devine. Lincoln could not take advantage of Peterborough's slip, losing 1-0 at home to Rotherham, who moved into fifth place.

Chester kept pace with the leaders thanks to a 2-1 victory at Hull. But it needed two goals in the final eight minutes, from Spencer Whelan and Rod Thomas, to overturn Rob Dewhurst's 68th-minute opener for Mark Hateley's side.

Brighton battled back from three goals down to secure a 4-4 draw against Colchester.

Two goals from Isiah Rankin and one from Tony Adcock gave the visitors a 3-0 half-time lead, only for Paul Emblen to draw Brighton level with a hat-trick.

Scott Stamps then put Colchester back in front before a Jeff Minton penalty eight minutes from time ensured the points were shared.

Stephen Halliday scored twice to help Hartlepool to a 3-0 victory over Scarborough at the Victoria Ground. Ian Clark added the third three minutes from time.

History in the making
How Rusedski heralded a new era
9

Bountiful boot
Stransky kicks life into the Tigers
10

The Guardian
sport

Gloom deepens for Tottenham

Late arrival . . . Villa's out-of-form Stan Collymore scores the first of his two goals at Villa Park PHOTOGRAPH: SEAN PAGET

Premiership: Aston Villa 4, Tottenham Hotspur 1

Collymore hears the sound of seasonal cheer at long last

Peter White sees Villa's costly striker score twice to double his season's tally

NO manager who has had Stan Collymore in his charge has ever fully been able to understand what makes the wayward striker tick. Brian Little was last night no nearer an explanation but was nevertheless a happy man after his £7 million summer investment crowned a week in which he was charged with assault by doubling his season's tally to four goals.

The first was a close-range tap-in while the second, a superlative free-kick from 30 yards, provided a fitting embellishment to an emphatic Villa performance.

The result means Tottenham's coach Christian Gross must surely include Jürgen Klinsmann for his return debut in the north London derby against Arsenal at White Hart Lane tomorrow. But judging by this inept performance, it remains to be seen whether even the mercurial skills and goal-scoring finesse of the German can lift their spirits.

It was a vitally important game for both sides, kicking off after all the other results were known. Victory for either would lift them clear of the relegation zone, and it was Villa who seemed the more determined to capitalise than their opponents from the outset.

The hosts' endeavours were rewarded in the 38th minute when a long ball out of defence by Steve Staunton was chased down the right by the energetic Savo Milosevic. The Serb turned inside before delivering an inswinging cross for Mark Draper to leap above his marker Stephen Carr and head into the net, despite the despairing dive of Ian Walker.

Spurs must have sensed their fortunes were about to change for the better when the referee failed to spot a shot from the substitute Stephen Clemence hitting the left arm of Colin Calderwood before being deflected beyond Mark Bosnich.

The Villa protests proved in vain, and there was further controversy eight minutes later when it appeared that Carr had handled in the penalty area. However, Mr Wilkie decreed that the offence was just outside, and Collymore's free-kick was beaten away by the visitors' defensive wall.

Villa refused to let the incidents affect their firm grip on the game, but could not possibly have envisaged that they would be handed their second goal so easily. Walker and his defender Allan Nielsen collided when trying to clear a looping centre from Collymore, and when the keeper dropped the ball Draper was quick to capitalise with a tap-in from close range.

Villa underlined their superiority with Collymore's two goals in the final eight minutes and even the normally unmoved Little jumped in delight on the touchline as Collymore saluted the supporters who have stood by him through the lean spells he has endured since his summer move from Liverpool.

Little said he had never considered leaving Collymore out of the side, even though the striker is facing a court appearance. Little said: "I was kept fully informed of the situation, and it never entered my mind that Stan should not play. The most important thing for people like him, whenever there's anything going on around them, is to play football.

"It's special for Stan to score goals because everyone's been going on about it. We said to him the only way he can answer people is by playing and scoring goals.

"Thankfully he's done that and it just shows you what people like him can achieve if they do things properly."

Gross was in a sombre mood after this latest defeat. "There was not enough determination in our play," he said, "and over the 90 minutes we were second to everything. In our situation you simply cannot give away the type of sloppy goals we conceded.

"The whole team didn't work as hard as I expected, and the full-backs came too late and were too deep to fill the midfield, so Aston Villa always had one more man and we were always under pressure."

Gross is hoping that both Klinsmann and Les Ferdinand will be available tomorrow. Klinsmann will return from Italy where he spent Christmas with his family and is expected to be drafted straight into the team, while Ferdinand missed yesterday's game with a leg injury.

Beaten man . . . Gross trudges off PHOTOGRAPH: MARK THOMPSON

Scores and reports, pages 21, 22 and 23

Frank Keating

All-rounder era ends with Compton and Wooller

THIS mellow, contemplative lull between Christmas and the crispy clean-sheet expectations for the new year gives us time for a final salute to those who will not make the starting line-up, as they say on Radio 5, for 1998.

These include the one genuine all-time great to raise his bat at the pavilion gate for the last time in 1997. It was of course Denis Compton, whose *alleluiahs* will doubtless be sung at more length in this springtime's Wisden.

He was in his 79th year and by the end those once famed dark-jet Brylcreemed locks were swan-white and fluffy-soft, yet Compton was no shrunk-shank. The shoulders remained as broad as the smile, the complexion robustly hale.

We last spoke sometime around his final Christmas when the knee — *the* knee — and the hips were giving him pain. But the real agony of old age came, he said, "when you hear that another lifelong chum has gone. One by one, my vintage is going". Denis knew it was time to rejoin his confraternity.

For those of a certain generation the unities were poignantly served by the news of the death this month of Bruce Woodcock. If Compton's *annus mirabilis* was 1947, so too it seemed to be when Yorkshire's heavyweight hero won the European title that March.

The upright fellow with the open, boyish face and classical left-lead Queensberry style was almost as celebrated as Compo then, but within a month his London promoter Jack Solomons had led him to the slaughter. The American Joe Baksi broke Woodcock's jaw, then battered him mercilessly for 20 more minutes.

Woodcock, that once valorous knight, died a fuddled recluse. The last interview I saw appeared a dozen years ago: "Nobody should feel sorry for me. I had my chances, but if someone gave me my life again I'd turn it down flat. I just pray I don't live till I'm 75." The gods kept taunting: Woodcock would have been 77 this January.

If Compton, with his resplendent football career at Arsenal too, was the glistening all-rounder, then Wilf Wooller was not far behind. After a thunderous debut as a precocious centre-three-quarter for Wales, he concentrated on reviving Glamorgan's cricket.

Next summer will mark the half-century since the county's first championship under Wooller. How delighted the old boy would have been to know that Glamorgan will celebrate it as champions. He died, doubtless fearlessly, in March.

Facing Northamptonshire one day in 1954, Glamorgan's veteran opener Emrys Davies was bowled by the fearsome Frank Tyson for a duck and retired between innings for fear of his life.

Wilf, then 41, looked pityingly at such funk and opened the second innings himself. The first whizzer from Tyson hit him between the eyes, and the bowler followed through, concerned. "Bugger off, Tyson," snarled Wilf. "You're too slow to hurt me, boy."

Stephen Chalke's classic Runs in the Memory recalls a tedious draw that saw the captains, Wooller (Rydal & Cambridge) and Freddie Brown (The Leys & Cambridge) exchange terse end-of-match pleasantries — "Thanks for fuck-all, Wilf", "Bugger off, Brown" — and behind them, Len Muncer turning to Dennis Brookes and saying, "I'm glad I sent my kids to elementary school."

AMONG other heroes Wales mourned this year were the footballer Ray Daniel, whose style was described by every obituarist as "cultured", and the gallant boxer Eddie Thomas.

It was goodbye too to Bryn Thomas, JBG of the Western Mail, who covered more matches involving Wooller at both rugby and cricket than any other journalist. He reported on 300 rugby Tests and probably as many Glamorgan games.

JBG died in his 80th year, a month after the 84-year-old Wooller and only one day after another, very different, writer of games, the felicitous stylist Alan Gibson.

Another Guardian reader who wrote sport for the Times, and you can't say fairer than that, was good Peter Ball, cruelly cut off in comparative youth, as was, with such appalling suddenness, that crackling enthusiast of this very space, Vincent Hanna.

Another one-off writer on sport, in his case horse-racing and the joys and perils thereof, to clip-clop into the sunset forever was Jeffrey Bernard. Last-post toasts would have been raised yesterday at his beloved Boxing Day Kempton.

Jeffrey recalled that it was there he once saw a life-gnarled old Kilburn Irishman having £700 in notes counted into his hand by a seething bookie whose bag bore the name Honest Joe Finnegan.

"Ye'll have heard of Finnegan's Wake?" the ancient punter enquired of his turf accountant: "Well, this is your fockin' wake, Finnegan."

Guardian COLLINS Crossword 21,156

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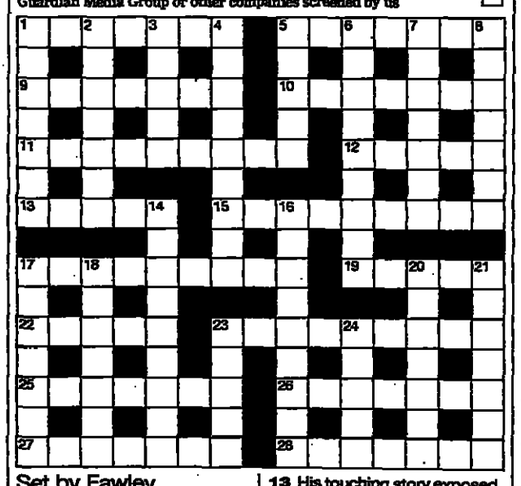

Set by Fawley

Across

1 Having read, knows he slayed them in audition for the Christmas lead! (7)
5 Capitol building in sight? (7)
9,10 Checking what was made in a test match? (7,7)
11 Club next to junk old form of training? (4,5)
12 Take lads off outside? He may well do (5)
13 His touching story exposed the folly of avarice (5)
15 A man's attempt to back appeasement, arguing deceptively? (9)
17 As suit is the same, the second's been shortened for the butler (5-4)
19 Welsh community in "Under ——" (5)
22 Part of Asia, yet I demonstrate its legendary character (5)
23 Flusters terribly about society becoming very hard (9)
25,26 Kind of gas described briefly by Esso, too? (7,7)
27 Cockney intellectual heard what's raised, in disbelief (7)
28 Almost evade part of the issue? I quoted Alice (7)

Down

1 Insist on king abdicating, having married one of the masses? (7)
2,18 Celebration of the Victorian age in progress on centenarian's birthday? (7,7)
3 Vivien Hunt (5)
4 See trophy shown off? That was magic! (3,6)
5 Listening, you should come in at some point — now? (2,3)
6 African in residence close to Victoria? (9)
7,20 Power matters — is that news? (7,7)
8 Refrain from baby-sitting? (7)
14 Brick placed longways supporting frame (9)
16 Extended parking — way to get round awkward detour? (9)
17 To some extent, format is secondary for a painter (7)
18 See 2
20 See 7
21 Supplied with alcohol, being an artist (7)
23 Second team prop (5)
24 Steel fencing? (5)

SOLUTION FOR XMAS PRIZE CROSSWORD ON JANUARY 5

I remember very clearly. Mrs Hodges said "What a lovely colour, Jess", and I spread it further and further across the page of the scripture book. If you got five As in a row you got sent to the headmistress to be congratulated, and so far I had got as far as four ....

AS Byatt on memories of a bloody biblical execution and a schoolgirl accident

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